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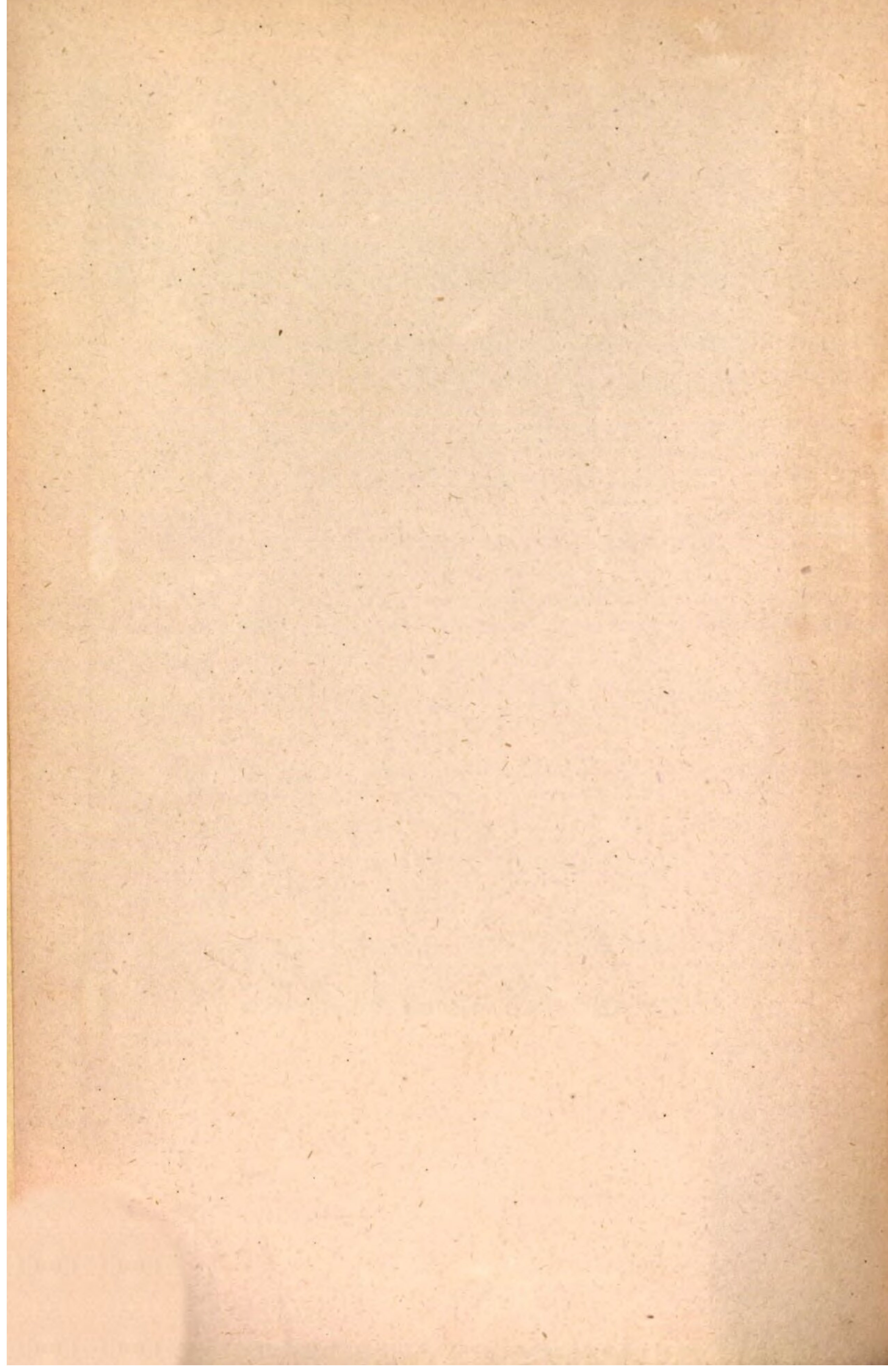
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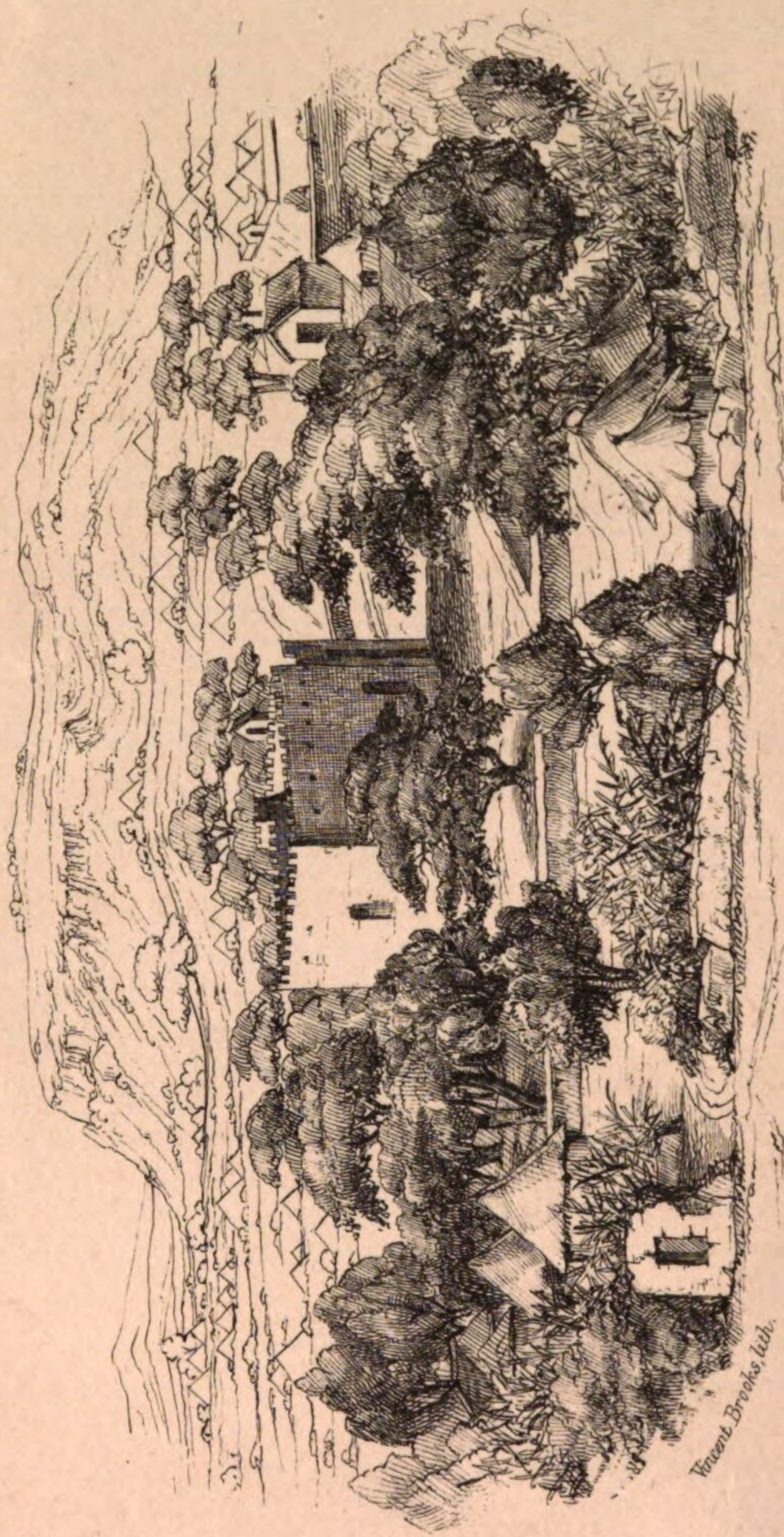
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CHURCH AT AXUM. EAST END.

NOTES

FROM THE

JOURNAL OF F. M. FLAD,

ONE OF BISHOP GOBAT'S PILGRIM MISSIONARIES
IN ABYSSINIA.

EDITED,

WITH A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH,

BY THE

REV. W. DOUGLAS VEITCH,

HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE ANGLICAN BISHOP IN JERUSALEM; AND SECRETARY TO
THE COMMITTEE OF THE JERUSALEM DIOCESAN MISSIONARY FUND.

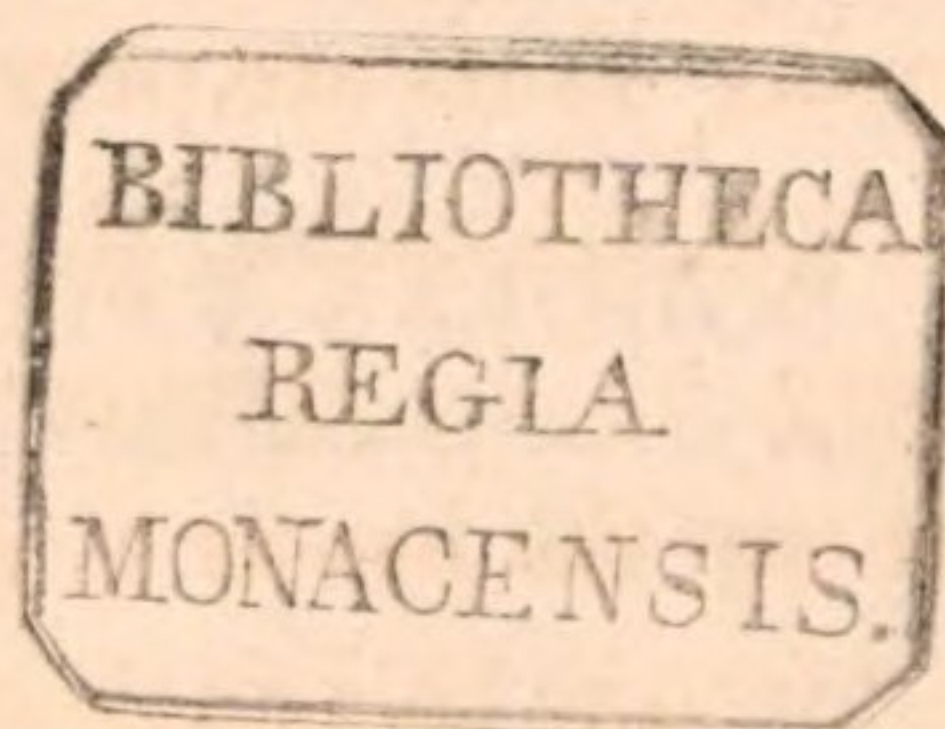
LONDON:

JAMES NISBET AND CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.

M.DCCC.LX.

NOTES
PREFACE
JOURNAL OF E. M. FLAD

EDINBURGH :
PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND COMPANY,
PAUL'S WORK.



PREFACE.

AT a time when missions to Africa are so warmly advocated, the following unpretending volume may not be without its use. It will convey intelligence of the existence *now* in Africa of a mission, as yet but little known, to an ancient Church and once-powerful nation—a mission which, after struggling through many difficulties, seems now, by God's blessing, fairly established, with a reasonable prospect of success, provided means to meet its increasing wants are provided. The Editor would use, with slight alteration, the prayer which terminates the history of the learned Ludolph:—"The Almighty God stir up the hearts of *British Christians* to lend their assistance to this ancient Christian nation, which might prove so useful to propagate Christianity in these remote parts of the world, and so glorious to themselves and their posterity!" And he would add his own fervent desire, that the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ, set forth before the Abyssinian Church, which so firmly withstood all the efforts of the Jesuits to bring

it into subjection to Rome, may, under God's blessing, lead it to reform those errors of doctrine and discipline which have crept in during the long ages of its eventful and often melancholy history.

A brief sketch of a portion of that history will be found in the following pages.

AT the commencement of the fourth century, Mero-
pius, a merchant, or, as some say, a philosopher of
Tyre, touching on the western coast of the Red Sea, as
he was journeying to India, was murdered by the bar-
barous natives, who, however, spared the lives of two
youths, his companions, Adesius and Frumentius, and
carried them to the court of the Emperor of Abyssinia.
Their talents soon brought them into notice. The latter
received employment as a secretary, the former was
employed in the buttery.

On the death of the King, the Queen, who adminis-
tered the government during her son's minority, pro-
moted them to the important post of tutors to the infant
sovereign. On attaining his majority, and assuming
the reins of government, he granted them permission
to return home. Adesius went at once to Tyre, but
Frumentius, who, apparently with some success, had
endeavoured, during his long detention at the Abyssinian
court, to spread the knowledge of the gospel, proceeded
to Alexandria to concert with the Patriarch, the re-
nowned Athanasius, means for establishing an Abys-

sinian Church. Seeing his zeal, and pleased with his character, the Patriarch considered the mission could not be intrusted to better hands than those of Frumentius himself, and accordingly consecrated him first Bishop of Abyssinia.*

Little is known, says Geddes, of this Church till we come down to the close of the fifteenth century. It followed the Alexandrian Church in the adoption of the Eutychian heresy of but one nature in Christ, condemned in the Council of Chalcedon A.D. 451, and was thus estranged from the communion of the great majority of the Oriental Churches; and when subsequently the Saracens (who, under the celebrated Amrou, invaded Egypt, A.D. 638) extended their dominions along the whole northern coast of Africa, as far as Suta, it was so entirely severed from all connexion with Christendom, that its very existence was forgotten. And well would it have been for Abyssinia had it remained in oblivion, till some other nation than Portugal revived its memory, and other hands than those of Loyola and his fellows undertook its restoration.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century some Portuguese vessels, which had been sent on a voyage of dis-

* Frumentius, under the name of "Abba Salama," is celebrated in the Ethiopian Martyrology.—(*Ludolph.*) He was consecrated A.D. 330. The Abyssinian Church, till this day, has but one bishop, styled Abuna, who is consecrated by the Coptic "Patriarch of Alexandria, of the Chair of St Mark." By the Arabic (pseudo) canons of the Council of Nice the seventh place of precedence is assigned to the Abuna of Abyssinia.

covery along the west coast of Africa by Don John II., having entered the river Zaire, in the kingdom of Congo, heard of Christians in the interior. On receiving this news, Don John, who was not more devoted to geographical pursuits than to the interests of what he thought Christianity, viz., the ascendancy of Popery, despatched Pedro Calvilham, as ambassador, to open communications with this long-forgotten branch of the Catholic Church. After many difficulties and delays, Calvilham succeeded in reaching Abyssinia, through Egypt, A.D. 1490, where he was courteously received by Alexander, the reigning Emperor. Alexander's design to send an embassy to Lisbon in return, was prevented by death, and his successor Nahod, conceiving some suspicion that Calvilham was a spy, cast him into prison. In the reign of his successor, Lebna Dengel, or David, the Empress Helena, regent during his minority, having heard of the Portuguese successes in India, willingly gave ear to a request from Alphonso Albuquerque, for aid in an expedition he was carrying on in the Persian Gulf; and feeling how advantageous it would be to the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia, surrounded as it was by Mohammedans and Pagans, to enter into an alliance with a powerful Christian nation, she sent an embassy to Lisbon, A.D. 1509, to Emmanuel, Don John's successor, presenting him with a fragment of the true cross, proposing a matrimonial alliance between the two royal families, and engaging, if he would send out a fleet, to supply it with every necessary store.

To this embassy the King responded, but it was not till 1520 that his ambassadors arrived in Abyssinia. Nothing of *immediate* consequence, however, was effected; nor was it till 1527, after Emmanuel's death, that they returned to Lisbon, bringing with them Zaga Zabo as Abyssinian ambassador to the Portuguese court. But the *ultimate* results were of great and melancholy importance to Abyssinia; for we may date from this intercourse the rise of those events which, for upwards of a century, plunged that unhappy kingdom in rebellion and civil war, and deluged it with blood, and the commencement of that effort to subjugate Abyssinia to Rome, which all but ended in the subversion of the monarchy and the Church.*

The commencement of troubles was as follows:—Ahmet, nicknamed Gragné, or the left-handed, a ferocious Mohammedan chief, King of Arur or Hurrar, east of Shon,† apprehensive of an alliance between Abyssinia and the Portuguese, now becoming powerful in India, allying himself with the King of Adel, at that time at war with David, invaded Abyssinia, and succeeded in making himself master of the fairest provinces of the empire. In this emergency, David resolved to solicit Portuguese aid, and compelling the Abuna to consecrate one Bermudes, a Portuguese long resident

* Salt calculates, that the commotions caused by the Jesuit effort to introduce the Roman faith lasted, with little intermission, for the long space of 114 years.

† Ludolph, 478.

in Abyssinia, as bishop, and nominate him his successor, he sent him ambassador to Lisbon and Rome. At Rome he was received with open arms by Paul III., who was *graciously pleased* to confer on him the patriarchate of Ethiopia,* in all the glory of which new dignity he experienced a most gracious reception at Lisbon, whither he went from Rome, and in 1539 embarked for Goa, with an order to the viceroy to send 400 or 500 Portuguese musketeers to the Emperor's assistance. It arrived, however, too late for David, who died in 1540, "leaving his son Claudius a broken and distressed empire, and all princes an example of the folly of depending on remote foreign succours."—(*Geddes.*)

In 1541, Christopher, son of the famous Vasco de Gama,† accompanied by the Patriarch Bermudes, arrived with 400 men, and a small train of artillery, and found the Emperor Claudius in the utmost peril. They performed, so say the Jesuits, prodigies of valour, and not a few miracles were wrought on their behalf—useless ones apparently—for, after a brief space, De Gama was entirely routed, captured, and beheaded.

After his death, the fortune of war changed, for Claudius, having succeeded in gathering an army of some 8000 or 9000 men, aided by the few surviving Portuguese, engaged Gagné in a pitched battle, in which he was victorious, and his antagonist slain.

* 1538. Strangely enough, recognising the validity of consecration by a *heretic*—and by *one bishop*.

† Another son, Stephen, was at this time Viceroy of Goa.

On his restoration to the quiet possession of his throne, Claudius shewed every disposition to treat the Portuguese with kindness. But the arrogant conduct, and the absurd demands of the Patriarch, soon produced discord. He claimed from the King, under pain of excommunication, and the loss of the Portuguese alliance, the fulfilment of an alleged promise to embrace the Roman Catholic faith, and cede one-third of his dominions to the Portuguese. The King stoutly denied that any such promise had ever been given—declared that, in his opinion, Popery was Nestorianism, and the Pope a heretic,* and that he (Bermudes) had nothing to do with his subjects, who had a patriarch of their own, the Patriarch of Alexandria, to whom they were subject ; and to prove his determination to maintain the established order of ecclesiastical affairs, as the Abunaship was vacant, he sent, *more majorum*, to request the Patriarch would consecrate and send one without loss of time. His request was immediately complied with, and on some impertinent interference on the part of Bermudes, the King committed him to prison. After some months he contrived to escape, and took refuge with the Baharnagash (Coast-king) of Tigré ; and thus ended the first act of the sad drama of Romish effort in Abyssinia. The second introduces the Jesuits on the stage.

* A somewhat similar judgment was pronounced by the Oriental Churches, on the settlement of the affairs of the Russian Church. "Old Rome has fallen through the *Apollinarian* heresy."—Mouravieff's "History of the Russian Church."

The peace obtained by this expulsion of the Romish missionaries was not destined to last. The celebrated Ignatius Loyola cast his eyes on Abyssinia as a worthy field for the exercise of his talents, and applied to Pope Julius for permission to head a mission to that devoted country. The Pope, however, could not, or would not, spare so zealous a servant, and refused; but, won over by the indefatigable perseverance* of his petitioner, he gave his sanction to a mission of members of the new order, which, "that it might represent Christ and His Apostles,"† was appointed to consist of a patriarch and twelve followers. Two of these were consecrated bishops, and were, in case they survived him, to succeed to the patriarchate in turns; the remaining ten were simple friars. The Papal bull was published February 17, 1554, addressed to "My beloved Son, John Nunez Baretto," appointing him "Patriarch of Ethiopia, and of all the kingdoms of our beloved Son in Christ, the illustrious Emperor of the said Ethiopia, which is at this time in a manner destitute of the consolations of a pastor."‡

* He enjoined all the Jesuits in Lisbon to petition the King once a month, and employed a Portuguese nobleman at Rome to speak to the Portuguese ambassador on the subject *once in three days*. He so faithfully obeyed the injunction, that at last, when the ambassador's servants saw him coming, they were wont to say, "Here comes our Lord's *tertian ague*!"

† Geddes, 151.

‡ Pio Nono, therefore, in the mission of Cardinal Wiseman to restore the priesthood and Church to England, has only followed infallible precedent.

Baretto and his coadjutors, Andrew Oviedo, Bishop of Hierapolis, and Melchior Carneiro, Bishop of Nice, *in partibus*, were accordingly consecrated at Lisbon, from whence they sailed for Goa, where they arrived in 1556. But it appears the King had had some doubts about the readiness of the Abyssinians to secure the benefits intended by the Jesuit mission, and besides this there was an ecclesiastical difficulty to be removed. The Holy Father had forgotten, when he appointed a patriarch in the person of Baretto, that Bermudes already held that office. Orders to the Viceroy of Goa were therefore sent, by a vessel then sailing, to despatch messengers into Abyssinia, as soon as the vessel arrived, to endeavour to solve the doubts and remove the difficulty. James Dias Oprestes, Gonzalo Rodriguez, and Fulgentio Freyere, all Jesuits, were selected, and proceeded forthwith to the Abyssinian court (having an interview with Bermudes, then with the Baharna-gash, on the way.) They were courteously received by the Emperor, but assured that it was needless for the King of Portugal to send learned friars to him, as he had enough of his own—that he had no intention to submit himself to the Pope, but would follow the customs of his ancestors, and yield obedience to the Patriarch of Alexandria, the *spiritual* head of the Abyssinian Church,* and to him alone. With this assurance they were courteously dismissed. The ecclesiastical

* According to the ancient constitution, the Emperor is supreme in all causes, ecclesiastical and civil.—*Geddes*, 32.

difficulty, however, which still remained was very characteristically solved by the Jesuit Rodriguez. He returned to Bermudes, and drew so frightful a picture of the danger he had incurred—of his narrow escape from death for having asserted Roman Catholic doctrines, and so insisted on the hopelessness of endeavouring, for the present, to bring about the submission of the Abyssinian Church to Rome, that the poor Patriarch fled to Goa. There he was entertained for a year in the Jesuits' College, "a civility that order seldom or never pass to any foreigner that they have not some design upon," and then provided with a passage to Lisbon.*

When the new Patriarch arrived at Goa, it was not deemed expedient that he should immediately proceed in person to Abyssinia; and his coadjutor, Oviedo, accompanied by several of the others, was sent instead. On their arrival, Oviedo wrote to the King, using the following characteristic language:—"I come from Rome, being sent by the Pope, *to be coadjutor to the Patriarch, who is now in the Indies, with whose authority I am invested, his Holiness having pleased to bestow it upon me.*" He was admitted to an audience, at which the same weary demands were made for submission to the Roman See, and the same answers

* By some *accident*, he was left behind at St Helena, where he was detained a whole year. He contrived, however, somehow to get to Lisbon in 1558, where he lived for several years, never, however, resigning his patriarchate.

returned as before. The King, moreover, to refute the accusation of heresy, placed in Oviedo's hands a confession of faith he had lately published; and further, worried by the pertinacity of the bishop, offered to refer the matter to his council. But the Jesuit, well aware that he had nothing to hope in that quarter, wrote an insolent letter to the Emperor, requiring an immediate answer, whether he would, or would not comply, with his demands, *that he might know how to act.**

Yet even this insolence could not rouse the Emperor to adopt those stringent measures which might have averted the evils about to befall his kingdom. He temporized—he permitted discussions, in which he himself took a part—he even answered a tract, written by Oviedo, on the errors of the Abyssinian Church, in which, while defending it, he declared that “he had neither seen nor heard anything to convince him that, as a Christian, he was bound to submit himself, and his empire, to the Pope.”

Insolence at last reached its culminating point; for, finding he availed nothing, either by arguments or demands, this foreign priest had the audacity, at Decome, on February 5, 1559, to excommunicate the Abyssinian Church. The Emperor seems to have paid

* “Your Highness must let me have your answer to what I have desired in His Holiness' name, *that I may take my measures accordingly.*” The whole letter is given in Geddes, and is well worth reading, as a specimen of the intolerable assumption of the Roman Church.

little regard to this empty noise, but it had this effect on his mind, that "the more he knew of Popery and its ways, the worse he liked it." But his attention was soon called, from ecclesiastical difficulties and disputes, to the defence of the empire. For Nur, son of the King of Adel, invaded Abyssinia, and Claudius was defeated, and died in battle.

Adam, his brother and successor in all except his dislike of Popery, was a very different character from Claudius, whom even the Portuguese allow to have been a prince of admirable natural parts, of good learning, and pleasing address. He declared himself the irreconcilable enemy of Romanism, to his toleration of which he attributed his brother's loss of his kingdom and life; and, sending for Oviedo, he threatened him with death "if he continued sowing and divulging Roman paradoxes among his subjects;" and on his refusing to obey, and declaring he would do what he considered his office required, he drew his sword, and, but for the entreaty of the Queen and the nobles, would have slain him on the spot. The constant intercourse kept up between the Portuguese and the Baharnagash of Tigré, and the knowledge, through some intercepted letters, that they had been soliciting military aid from Goa, by emissaries despatched through the Baharnagash's country, increased this dislike; and the suspicion of intrigue was soon confirmed, for the Baharnagash retired from court, and, depending on assistance from Goa, which, as we learn by a letter of the coadjutor to

Pope Pius V. had been promised, took up arms, and was immediately joined by the greater number of the Portuguese. The arms of Adam were victorious, and the Baharnagash, accompanied by the Portuguese, took refuge with the Turks, who, encouraged by their representations of the distracted state of the empire, and of the troops they expected to receive from Goa, invaded Abyssinia. Adam wisely kept Oviedo and the fathers with him as hostages, and carried them to the war, and, staking all on the issue of a pitched battle, he was defeated and slain. The fathers, who were with the camp, were taken prisoners, and stripped of all their possessions.

Adam was succeeded by Saged. The distracted state of the kingdom seems to have left him little time to attend to ecclesiastical affairs. And, during his long reign of thirty years, the fathers seem to have confined their attention to urgent applications for military aid,—“We are agreed,” wrote the Patriarch Baretto, to the General of the Order of the Jesuits, “that nothing but a good body of Portuguese soldiers would ever be able to reduce Ethiopia to the obedience of the Roman Church.” Again, “If we had but 500 or 600 stout musketeers, we would undertake to reduce it.” Their pertinacity, however, while it failed of success, appears to have worn out the patience of the Portuguese government; for the Regent Cardinal Don Henry, uncle to the King Don Sebastian, disgusted by their urgency and their indiscreet accusa-

tion against himself as indifferent to the interests of the Catholic Church, applied to Pope Pius V. for their recall, requesting that they might be sent somewhere else, "where they might do more good, and make less noise." * A Papal order was accordingly issued that Baretto should go on a mission to Japan or China. He declared his willingness to obey; but begged his Holiness to consider well, before he abandoned a mission to a country affording the prospect of a rich harvest of souls, and abounding with the finest gold. But neither the souls nor the *gold* prevailed. The mission was abandoned; and Baretto, while preparing to depart on his long voyage, died at Fremona, whither the fathers had retired, July 9, 1567.

"Thus," in the words of Dr Lee, "ended a mission which, for the extent of mischief which it did and the villany displayed by its abettors, can only be equalled by that which succeeded it—undertaken with similar views, supported by the same base machinations, and terminating in similar disgrace."

The commencement of the next mission may be dated from A.D. 1603. Several ineffectual efforts were made in the intervening period, but it was in that year that Peter Pays,† a Spaniard, appeared on the scene,

* Geddes, 211.

† Pays was a bold and zealous man. As early as 1588 he had been sent to Abyssinia from Goa, disguised as an Armenian merchant—been taken prisoner by the Turks, and endured a seven years' captivity. He turned his captivity to good account, by making himself thoroughly master of the Arabic language.

again to inflict on unhappy Ethiopia a renewal of all its former sufferings. He succeeded, after some little time, in securing the favour of the King, Za Dengel, and received an invitation to court, where he so well improved his opportunity, that ere long the King confided to him his conviction of the truth of the Romish doctrine, and his determination to submit himself to the authority of the Pope. The favour shewn to the foreigners, however, alienated the affections of his own subjects; and the nobles, complaining that the King had revolted from the Alexandrian Church, united against him. A rival claimant for the crown complicated the affair; and in the war which broke out Za Dengel lost his life.

During the disputes which ensued about the succession to the throne, Peter prudently retired to Fremona, where he found no less than four Jesuits arrived to aid him. And when Sultan Seged finally succeeded in establishing himself on the throne, two of these were sent to congratulate him on his success. The current of royal favour seems to have been turned towards the fathers by their endeavours; and Peter and his coadjutors were invited to court, where they so well employed their time and opportunities, that ere long the Emperor, and the Ras Cella Christos, his brother, acknowledged their conversion to Romanism—the latter making open profession of his faith—a step which succeeding events renders it not unjust to suspect was brought about by other means than simple conviction.

Both the Emperor and his brother wrote to the Pope and King of Spain, acknowledging their own conversion, and promising submission to the Roman See, but *provided troops were sent to support them*, without which they confess "*it is impossible.*" But, in the meantime, the favour shewn to the Romanists, again, as in the former reign, excited attention and alarm, and drew out the Abuna from his retirement. Finding that public religious discussions had been held without his sanction or presence, and, moreover, that the Emperor had usurped episcopal functions, by interdicting the assertion of the "one nature in Christ," under severe penalties, he made his appearance at court, and even threatened the Emperor with excommunication. Disregarding the threat, and offended at its boldness, and urged on by his Jesuit advisers, he issued a second decree, forbidding the assertion of the one nature under penalty of death. The Abuna thundered forth the threatened excommunication—the Emperor answered it by a proclamation commanding all his subjects to embrace the Roman faith, on which, at the recommendation of the Abuna, the nobles formed an association for defence, in which they were heartily joined by the great body of the people. And now rebellion, war, and bloodshed commenced.

Elius, the Emperor's son-in-law, was the first to take up arms; and the Queen, with many of the grandees, foreseeing the evils which were about to ensue, implored the Emperor to desist. But, infatuated by his Jesuit

counsellors, he replied, that, "although he was sensible that he had so far lost the hearts of his subjects, by the favour he had shewn to the Roman Catholics, that they were all ready to rebel, he was resolved either to lose his crown or establish that faith in Ethiopia." A convention of the clergy was summoned, at which the Abuna was present, which ended "in leaving matters a deal worse than it found them." And as a last resource, the Abuna, attended by a large concourse of the monks and clergy, waited on the Emperor, and, throwing themselves at his feet, implored him to give up the effort, which they warned him would fail—for that "he was not able to destroy a religion which had been maintained in Ethiopia by so many emperors through so many ages."* But all was ineffectual. The die was cast.

The Abuna joined the party of Elius, who was supported by the great body of the people. But the royal arms were crowned with success. Elius was slain, and with him the aged Abuna, who had nearly completed the full term of a century of life.

Encouraged by this success, the Emperor proceeded with his innovations; forbade the observation of the Sabbath;† enjoined all his subjects to work on that day; and committed the proclamation of the edict to Joanel, the Viceroy of Begameder. Well aware of the storm it would raise, Joanel performed his duty

* Geddes.

† The Abyssinian Church observed the Jewish Sabbath as well as the Lord's-day.

with right goodwill, and an instant rebellion in the province was the consequence. The people flew to arms, imploring the Viceroy to lead them; a petition he answered by the assurance that "he never would lay down his arms till he had secured their religion to them." The rebellion was, however, speedily suppressed. Joanel was defeated, and escaped to the territory of the Gallas, where he was murdered.

Next followed a revolt of the Damotes, excited by the intolerable exactions of the Jesuits; but that too, in its turn, was equally unsuccessful. And Pays, just before his death, had the satisfaction of seeing his iniquitous efforts crowned with temporary success. For, elated by his good fortune, the Emperor, thinking the time was come for the execution of his long-contemplated design, performed a solemn act of confession and abjuration of heresy to Peter, by whom he was absolved and reconciled to the Roman Church.

Immediate intelligence of this auspicious event was despatched to Goa and Rome; and though without any positive authority, the General of the Order made submission for the Emperor to the Pope. The Emperor appears to have heard of this act, and of the nomination of a new Patriarch of Ethiopia, in the person of Alphonso Mendez, without disapproval. Mendez speedily sailed for the East; and arriving at Fremona in 1624, the public submission of the Emperor was fixed for the close of the year. A splendid ceremony was performed. The Patriarch preached on the text, "Thou art Peter," &c., "the common Roman mump-

simus," as Geddes styles it ; and then the King solemnly pronounced the submission—"To the Holy Father, Urban VIII., who is, by the grace of God, Pope at this time and our Lord, and to his successors in the government of the Church, I swear obedience and submission, with all humility, at his feet, for our own person and empire." After the Emperor, his son, Basilides, the princes, viceroys, and ecclesiastics took the oath ; and thus for brief space the ancient independent Church of Abyssinia seemed abolished.* It was but a show, however. The great body of the people were still firmly attached to the Church of their fathers, and ready to rise at any moment, when a leader could be found, in defence of the ancient religion.

Indications of this spirit were not wanting. Two of the missionaries persisting in saying mass in a church in Tigré, were murdered the same night in their beds. But about two years after the arrival of the Patriarch, the storm burst forth. Tecla George, the Emperor's son-in-law, undaunted by the ill success of his predecessors in revolt, took up arms with the avowed object of defending the Alexandrian Church. Collecting all the crucifixes and Romish trumpery on which he could lay his hands, he made a bonfire of them ; but, unhappily, his next act was not so innocent ; for, provoked by his chaplain's refusal to return to the Alexandrian faith, he put him to death with his own hands. His

* Native priests were interdicted from officiating till licensed by the Patriarch, and all subjects commanded to embrace the Roman faith.

effort was, however, an utter failure. His forces were routed. He himself and his sister fell into the hands of the victors, and in spite of all the efforts of the Queen and the court, both were hanged.

And now the state of the country was wretched in the extreme. Men fled "to bury themselves in caves and dens of the earth, whence they were either dragged to be burned alive, if they refused conversion, or smoked to death in their retreats." But success bred presumption, and ere long the intolerance of these Jesuit disturbers of the peace, worked their downfall.

On some pretext or other, they excommunicated a nobleman of high rank, chamberlain to the Emperor and a counsellor of state, adding the indignity of corporal chastisement. And, not satisfied with this insult to the laity, they further alienated the monks, by forbidding mass to be celebrated in a church polluted by the interment of the Etchegua, the head of the body, ordering at the same time that it should be disinterred as the corpse of a heretic, and thrown out to be devoured by the wild beasts.

A new rebellion broke out in Bagemeder for the defence of religion, quelled only with great bloodshed, but in which Kebo Christos, the royalist general fell, a loss soon followed by the death of another general, Tecne Egzi, favourable to the Roman cause. Encouraged by these losses of their opponents, the Alexandrian party ventured on a strong remonstrance to the Emperor, on the folly of attempting to force a religion on his subjects they were determined not to receive, at the cost of all the horrors

of civil war. The remonstrance was not altogether without effect. Suspicious of a conspiracy among the Roman Catholics to dethrone him, and set the Ras Cella Christos in his place, combined with the miserable troubles which affected the country, tended to weaken his regard for the fathers, and some overtures were made for an accommodation. They met, of course, with the strenuous opposition of the Patriarch, and came to nothing. Fresh rebellion was the consequence, and fresh bloodshed, till the Emperor's party meeting with some ill success, a certain toleration was permitted to the Alexandrian party, which, however, while it was offensive to the Patriarch, failed to give anything like general satisfaction to the Abyssinians. Civil war, therefore, still continued, till at last, after a sanguinary battle, in which no less than 8000 of the Alexandrian party fell, a pathetic appeal was made to the Emperor. "You see, sire, how many bodies lie before you. Whose are they? Are they heathens or Mohammedans? They are, to a man, Christians—your own subjects. Those breasts, sire, instead of lying breathless at your feet, would, on a better policy, have been the terror of the infidels. Forbear, we entreat you, to persevere in a contest which must end in the overthrow of your religion and empire." The Queen also added her earnest expostulations, representing how surely this frantic attempt to set up a new faith, in opposition to the general opinions, attended as it was by such misery and loss of life to his own subjects, must eventually cause his own destruction.

These remonstrances had the desired effect in opening

the eyes of the Emperor to the folly of the hopeless contest on which he had entered. A council was summoned, in which it was decided that Abyssinia should return to the faith of its forefathers. The Jesuits remonstrated, but received for answer that all that could be done had been done to establish the Church of Rome ; that the effort had left the Emperor all but bereft of a kingdom and subjects, and therefore it was vain to expect more from him.

A proclamation was immediately made, permitting the free exercise of the Alexandrian faith, the priests to take possession of the churches of which they had been deprived, and to officiate as formerly. It was received with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy. Bonfires of Roman trumpery were seen blazing all over the land, and the praises of the Emperor were in every mouth. The permissive proclamation was soon followed by a positive decree, commanding all the subjects to return to the ancient Church of the land ; and the Emperor having been permitted to undo, in some measure, the evil he had caused, departed this life, dying in September 1632, about a couple of months after he had restored peace to the long-afflicted realm.

Jesuit intrigue and efforts were now brought to an end. Basilides, the late Emperor's son and successor, impressed with the conviction that his late father's suspicion of conspiracy was justly entertained, banished the fathers *to Fremona* ; and soon after, intelligence reaching him of efforts on their part to compass their long-cherished ends by the aid of Portuguese soldiers from Goa, *from Ethiopia*.

Since that period Romish efforts have been made, but without success. We come now to the commencement of a mission of a very different character.

In the close of the year 1829, Mr Gobat was sent into Abyssinia by the Church Missionary Society, and returned to Cairo after a four years' residence, the results of which have been published.* He again returned, 1834, when a mission was commenced, from which, however, he was forced to retire, in 1836, from long-continued and dangerous illness. It was carried on till 1838, when it was abandoned, very much in consequence of Jesuit intrigues. In 1845 he was appointed vice-president of "The Malta Protestant College," and in the following year, Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem. He never forgot Abyssinia; and on January 28, 1856, four missionaries, who had been for some time training under his own eye in Jerusalem, left Cairo, and on the 9th of May following, crossed the frontiers and entered Abyssinia. The following brief notices of the progress of their enterprise are gathered from the Journal of Martin Flad, one of their number:—

On the 28th of January 1856, Messrs Flad, Bender, Mayer, and Kienzlen, who had been educated at the Institution for training Pilgrim Missionaries at Saint Crischona, and subsequently prepared for upwards of a year under Bishop Gobat's eye in Jerusalem, left Cairo to commence a mission in Abyssinia,† and on

* Gobat's "Three Years in Abyssinia."

† "On the mode adopted by the Moravian brethren, viz:—Beginning a small settlement and cultivating the land, while the

May 9, "safely arrived, with their freight of Bibles,* at Wöchne, the first Abyssinian village and market-place."

From thence, leaving his brethren suffering from illness, Mr Flad went "to the camp of King Theodorus, on the lake Zana, over against the isle Debra Mariam, some miles to the east of the place where the Abais (Nile) leaves the lake." The King had left the camp before he arrived. He therefore sought the Abuna Salama in the island above mentioned, who received him kindly, and wrote to the King on his behalf. An immediate answer was returned by his majesty, expressive of satisfaction at the arrival of the missionaries, directing Mr Flad to remain with the Abuna till his return, and enjoining the Governors of Dembea and Tchelga to bring on the brethren and their luggage from Wöchne.

"After a few days," writes Mr Flad, "the King arrived, and I had the honour of being invited to dine with him, under the royal tent, in company with Mr Bell (an English gentleman), Likmaguas† to the King,

missionaries instructed the youth of the neighbouring villages in the gospel of Jesus Christ, without pretending to any ecclesiastical authority."—*Bishop Gobat's Address at the third annual meeting of the Jerusalem Diocesan Missionary Fund.*

* One hundred Bibles and three hundred Testaments in the vernacular Amharic, a grant from the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Society generously paid the whole cost of transport from London to Abyssinia. It has made two other grants subsequently, making, in all, 350 Bibles, 1050 Testaments, in Amharic; 140 Testaments, 30 Epistles, 50 Psalters, and 150 parts, in Ethiopic; to the value, in all, of £640, besides a grant in money of £145.

† A military title, corresponding, in some measure, to our marshal.

and Cantiba Heslu of Gondar. The conversation turned on Bishop Gobat. Cantiba said, amongst other things, 'Samuel was a good and pious priest, but his doctrine about the Virgin Mary is wrong. He compared her to a house in which Christ lived nine months, without purifying and sanctifying it; you English are the enemies of St Mary, and therefore bad Christians.' When the King heard this, he raised himself angrily and said, 'Ye Gondar debteras* are like devils; you begin strife and contention with every one, representing those better than yourselves as bad men and heretics; you will all receive the reward of the devil.' On this all were silent; and Mr Bell told me afterwards that we may regard Cantiba Heslu as the enemy of all Europeans."

Shortly after this interview the King shifted his quarters, and was followed by the Abuna and Mr Flad. The latter was on the point of returning to the island for his luggage, in order to join his brethren, when, most providentially, he was sent for by the King, by which, probably, his life was saved. "Praised be God!" he says, "my life was thereby saved. A sudden blast upset the boat, and I, who cannot swim, would doubtless have been drowned. I suffered a great loss in my journal and only German Testament. Divers were sent by the Abuna and the King, but nothing was recovered."†

* "Debtera" means learned. It is also applied to those who are preparing for holy orders.

† The above brief extract is from Mr Flad's recollections of the lost journal.

JOURNAL.

Tuesday, June 3.—To-day I was dismissed by the King, with a recommendation to Bethada Warke, Governor of Efag, to take care of me on my journey, and provide good quarters every night.

June 4.—Reached Ouarata, on the Zana, a free town. The country, which is exceedingly fruitful, though unhealthy, produces plenty of honey and wax. Fish is abundant. The teeth of the hippopotamus, which nearly equal ivory, are exported from hence, by way of Massowah, to the East Indies.

June 5.—Arrived at Faggera. On leaving Ouarata this morning, a nun, who met me outside the town, taking me, as she said, for the angel Gabriel, ran after me, crying and imploring my blessing and the remission of her sins! Many people came round me at my evening quarters, to whom I read out of the Amharic Testament.

June 8.—Bethada Tshova—Sunday. I retired and was refreshed by solitary prayer and meditation on God's Word. In the evening my host gave a feast to the poor, for the good of his soul, as he said. Numbers came to drink Abyssinian ale, who quite filled his large house. By his permission, I addressed them, as well as I was able, in their own language, on God's grace, revealed in Christ—the sinfulness of man, and the necessity of a change of heart and life. An alaca,* who was present, asked, "What is your faith?"

* "Alaca means *great*; but now corresponds to *rector*, in English.

“All that is written in the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, and the twenty-seven of the New,” I replied, “we believe, and seek to live up to, and act accordingly; but we do not believe other books which do not agree with these Divine ones.”

“But do you not,” he continued, “revere also St Mary, St George, St Michael, Tecla Haimanout, and others?—and do you not pray to them?”

“We honour them,” I said, “as far as we know them to have been pious; but, as no passage of God’s Word commands it, we neither adore nor pray to them; and, inasmuch as we know that they were sinners like ourselves, we judge such also to be sinful. It is written, ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.’”

He seemed grieved, and, after a pause, said, “But the apostles prayed to St Mary.”

“The apostles, dear friend! this is not written in the Holy Scripture,” I replied.

“But it is in our books,” he answered.

“Who can say that your books are true?” I rejoined. “I fear many lies are written in them. But look,” (and I held out my Testament,) “this is the Word of God, the holy Gospels, and the Epistles of the Apostles. He who believes this, and lives accordingly, will never perish.”

However, it is not necessary that an alaca should be a *priest*. On the contrary, few priests are alacas. An alaca has the care of furnishing everything for, and placing priests in, the church of which he has the charge. There are churches which, after defraying all the expenses, bring an income of a thousand dollars yearly to the alaca.” —Gobat’s “Three Years in Abyssinia,” 2d ed. p. 54, note.

June 9.—Arrived at Gunter, where I found my three brethren, Kienzlen and Mayer, ill of fever. They had much to relate of suffering and privations during their stay at Wöchne.

June 10.—To-day many priests and scholars came from different churches to ask for books. To those who could read we gave Bibles or Testaments, in order that there might be one or two in each church. We exhorted all, on dismissing them, to study God's word diligently themselves, and to read it to others, which many of them most solemnly promised to do (in the face of God).

June 11.—A Falasha (a Jew) came to-day to receive a Bible I had promised him yesterday. He received it with the most extravagant signs of joy. The *Christian* priests, however, were much dissatisfied with my giving a Bible to a Jew. Yet every one I asked, even the Christians, bore testimony that he read it himself, and to others.

Continuing their journey, (the three brethren still suffering severely from fever, distributing Bibles wherever the capacity of the applicants to read rendered it expedient, and taking every opportunity of preaching to the people,) we find them—

June 14, at Adisgje, at the house of Fentscho Engeda. As he had formerly asked a Bible, I now gave him one. Although he received it with pleasure, I could plainly see a pistol or a sword would have been a more acceptable present. The Abyssinians have a very general persuasion that it is only the priests who

have any concern with the Bible. I sought therefore to convince him how much more precious the Word of God is than any worldly possession, being our only guide to heaven.

Early on the 17th, we left Adisgje, accompanied by Fentscho Engeda, who was met on the road by messengers and soldiers from the King, ordering him to prepare provisions against the next day for a party of the military who would arrive. He sent for me in the evening. I found him surrounded by the King's soldiers and his own servants, to whom he related nearly all I had as yet said to him on the subject of religion, as well as much that had been read to him, at his own request, by Eos Tadeous, the priest, who came with us from Jerusalem, and by a debtera he had sent for of his own accord. All listened attentively; and the address, we hope, was not in vain. A soldier said, "It is true, we are bad Christians, and in our present state cannot go to heaven. Tell us what we must do to be saved." I answered the question as well as I could in their language, and I hope evangelically.

Passing on to Emfras, where we arrived on the 18th, we were transferred to the protection of Gurumba Sahle, the Shûm (governor), and here an event occurred which threatened us with some trouble, but at the same time gave us an opportunity of enforcing the duty of submission to the Government.

We had dismissed the people who had brought on our baggage, and the Governor, who had gone to the market to procure animals to carry it on, severely beat

a merchant who refused to give his for the purpose. The man threw himself on the ground, feigning to be mortally wounded. In the afternoon, the son and a kinsman of the merchant came with fetters to bind the Shûm, and carry him to the King, that they might demand blood-money for the man, whom they reported to be dying. After a clamorous discussion, they referred the case to me. I said, "The Shûm is acting by the King's authority, whose subjects you are. The merchant has refused to obey his commands to carry on the baggage, and therefore he is justly punished. Certainly it would be wrong in the Shûm to beat a man to death for such a cause; but I suspect you are lying when you represent him to be dying. We are strangers, and if you carry the Shûm to the King, which we cannot prevent, we will accompany him, to represent to his majesty how disobedient you have been." I then asked them, on their oath, whether the man was really dying, when they acknowledged that he was not—that he was much better. On this the Shûm restored their asses, which he had seized, and thus the affair ended peaceably.

On the 21st we reached Efag. Bender was so ill during the journey that we were obliged to put a servant on the mule along with him, to keep him from falling off. On Sunday, 22d, Mayer and Kienzlen accompanied me on a visit to the Abuna. We presented him with an Amharic Bible, some lead pencils, sealing-wax, shoes, medicines, and an umbrella. He accepted also a box of books, from which, however, he only

selected those in Ethiopic. His conversation was chiefly about medicine, agriculture, and gardening. But in our presence he commanded the Af Negus Warke to solicit from the King three houses for us, and provision of bread, milk, and meat. On our taking leave, he said, "If you need money, or anything else, write to me to Gondar. I am your friend, and you are my brethren."

We likewise visited the Etchegua, (head of the monks,) to whom we presented books in Amharic, as well as Ethiopian, which at first he declined. We overheard him say to the monks present, (not thinking, I suppose, that we understood the Amharic,) "The English are our enemies,—they bring us Amharic books, to render our sacred language obsolete." At last he accepted the books, but begged from us a silk caftan and an umbrella ; which we had not to give him.

June 23.—Applications made to-day by several priests and debteras for Ethiopic Testaments and Psalters. We found, however, they were unable to translate what we made them read (St Matt. ii.) This gave us an opportunity of urging on them their wickedness in being ignorant of God's Word, when they had undertaken the office of instructors of the people, and despising the translation which they understand. We find that the priests generally highly disapprove of the Bible's being translated into Amharic.

June 27.—To-day a messenger from the King brought an order to the Shûm to bring us to him at Derita. Many people came to us for books—among these a

soldier, from a distance of fifteen miles. Considering the distance he had travelled a proof of a sincere desire for the Word of God, we complied with his request, and gave him a Testament, which he promised to study and read to his comrades.

I had also the following conversation with a Falasha* :—

FLAD. "What is your belief?"

FALASHA. "The law, David, and the prophets."

FL. "Have you these books, and in what language?"

FAL. "We have them, and in Ethiopic."

I saw, however, that when I named the prophets, he did not know them; and I continued, "What hopes and promises have you?"

FAL. "Our hope is the law and God."

FL. "But do you not know that a man cannot be saved by the law?"

FAL. "How so?"

FL. "The law condemns all who do not keep it; God's Word tells us we are all sinners, and 'the just man falleth seven times a-day.' Our own experience shews us this; so we cannot be saved by the law."

He seemed deeply moved, and looked on the ground. After a time he raised his eyes to heaven, and sighing, said, "God is our hope."

FL. "How good it would be for you to believe in Jesus Christ, by whose grace you may be justified and saved. Without believing in Him, a man cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

* The Jews in Abyssinia are so called.

FAL. "You believe in Christ. Well, your country is good, and your Christians. But the Abyssinian Christians are bad ; their works are wicked, and their worship is idolatry. They bow down to images, which the law forbids."

FL. "True ; but you are not justified by this for rejecting Christ ?"

FAL. "In our books there is nothing written about Christ."

FL. "David, and Moses, and the Prophets write about Messiah, whom God would send into the world, to save the world by Him."

FAL. "I do not know this,"

He wished to go, but I detained him, wishing to gain some information about this interesting remnant of God's people. So I asked, "Have you any schools ?"

FAL. "Yes ; but only for boys."

FL. "Why not for girls too ?"

FAL. "Because it is not becoming to instruct females."

FL. "What do you think about the state of the soul after death ?"

FAL. "No one is allowed to die in our houses, because the soul would not be able to soar freely to heaven. When any one is at the point of death, we carry him into a tent, where he remains till he dies. If he has lived piously, kept the law, and done no ill to his neighbour, his soul flies up to the place where Abraham and David are. If he has lived wickedly, it goes downward."

FL. "Have you any communication with the Christians?"

FAL. "No; we speak with them, but do not eat with them, or partake of anything that comes from them. If we meet with them, we wash ourselves, and our clothes seven times. We never allow them to enter our houses."

FL. "But should a Christian, by some means, enter your house, would you injure or kill him?"

FAL. "Oh, no; that would be a sin; but the place where he sat, and wherever he stepped, would be washed seven times."

FL. "How many Falashas do you believe to be in Abyssinia?"

FAL. "Lo! as many as there are hairs on my head."

FL. "At what time did you come into Abyssinia?"

FAL. "I know not; our priests do."*

The following day, the 28th, the King countermanded the order for going to him at Derita, directing them to remain at Efag till his return from an expedition to Weinnadega, when he promised to carry them with him to Debra Tabor. But finding it impossible to procure lodgings, or even food, Flad and Mayer went to Derita, where they were graciously received, and were furnished with an order for "a good house" and provisions. At this interview, "we," writes the Journal, "presented the King with an Amharic Bible

* Some Christians, who were present at the conversation, estimated the numbers at 10,000.—Ed.

adorned with gold, an Amharic atlas, and a work on ecclesiastical and profane history, several Amharic and Ethiopic New Testaments and Psalters, and a Bible, with other gifts. On receiving them, to our great delight, he said, looking at the *Ethiopic* books, 'What is the use of these?—the *translation* is far better.' Mr Bell, however, acknowledged to us after the interview, that at that moment his Majesty would have been more pleased with a box of English gunpowder than, as he said, with books he already possessed. He told us also that evil, and, as he believed false, reports had reached the King's ears. Betwodet Beru, for instance, says, that on your journey you received the sacrament without any church or tabot;* and his father confessor reports that you have been distributing books, and have written down the names of all who receive them, sending them to England, saying, 'All these have accepted our faith.' He warned us, if we

* The tabot is accounted very sacred. It is a plank of wood, about an ell in length and one half in breadth. In the centre is one large cross, inscribed with the name of Christ, with twelve smaller ones round it, with the names of the apostles. It is placed in the chancel, (Holy of Holies, as they call it,) and the elements at the celebration of the Lord's Supper are placed on it, and also brought out on it, to be distributed to the communicants. It is considered a representation of the ark of the covenant, said to be preserved in the Church of Axum. The tradition is, that Menilec, the supposed son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, from whom the royal family are said to have sprung, having been educated at Jerusalem under his father, on his return to Abyssinia, stole many of the sacred utensils from the Temple, and among the rest the ark, which he deposited at Axum.—ED.

desired to remain in Abyssinia, to say nothing about faith and religion,* and avoid all appearance of teaching. What falsehoods have been spread about us ! In all calumny, disgrace, or persecution, Lord Jesus be Thou with us !”

Mr Flad had another interview with the King on the following day, affording an opportunity of explaining the subject of missions. After some conversation “about the construction of bridges, road-making, house-building, and burning lime, Af Negus Warke inquired earnestly “who were the people who sent so many books, and what was their motive ?” I told him that, some time ago, Samuel Gobat, now a bishop in Jerusalem, who had visited Abyssinia, and still greatly loved the people, had sent us with these books, because he knew they had very few copies of the Word of God in their own language. Besides, there are many pious people in England and Germany who consider it a Christian duty, though the expense is very great, to send the Bible to all nations in their own languages,—moved to this by the love of Jesus, and their desire for the eternal salvation of their brethren, through Him. He was much astonished at this, and observed, “This shews that the English are good Christians.”

For a brief space the missionaries were housed in a miserable abode, at a place called Bata, where, not only they had barely room to move about among their bag-

* How different the King's feelings are now, and how unnecessary the caution of Mr Bell, will be seen afterwards. The position of the missionaries at this moment must have been very trying.—ED.

gage, but, though three were suffering from fever, were frequently obliged to shift their beds during the night, to escape the torrents of rain which poured down through the roof. Still, from day to day, they continued their work, availing themselves of every opportunity of preaching the gospel, and distributing the Word of God.

They had many conversations with the priests. One or two specimens follow, as a sample of what is frequently to be found in the Journal:—

Friday, June 4.—Some priests, with their scholars, came to-day for books, which we supplied. With Walda Sellasse I read Matt. viii. When I asked how he explained the word faith, he answered, “To believe in the tabot, St Mary, St Michael, St George, Tecla Haimanout,” &c., and in the Triune God. I read Heb. xi. with him, and sought to shew him, from it, what true saving faith is. But the Abyssinians too generally understand nothing of the evangelical faith described by St Paul. It is hidden from them.

Again, on the 9th.—Ticklé, priest of the church of Raphael, came to-day. We had a long discussion about faith, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and fasting. The latter he asserted was commanded in the Word of God, promising to shew me the passages at his next visit, as well as commands to observe circumcision, and to baptize male infants on the fortieth, females on the eightieth day after birth. I then led the conversation to some of the errors of his Church, urging him that we ought to receive God’s Word as the only rule of our

faith, and that it was great sin to esteem any book as equal to, or, as some of them do, superior to the Bible.

Next day he returned. He at once declared their dislike of the Amharic translation. I told him it was indeed sinful to despise what they could understand, and value what not one in a hundred could comprehend. He is counted a learned man, and not a little proud of his reputation. After reading Matt. ii., which he translated tolerably, I reminded him of his promise of yesterday. He made diligent search in his Ethiopic Testament, but, it is needless to say, failed to find the promised authorities. He then admitted the observances he had mentioned were not enjoined in the gospel, but in other works.

FLAD. "But which word is the greater, God's or man's?"

TECKLA. "God's certainly."

FL. "That Word, while it does not contain these things, teaches us we cannot be saved by fasting, and alms, and observances, but only by faith in Christ, by whom we are justified, and have peace with God."

He seemed not to like this turn of the conversation, and sought to change it. "Do your priests marry," he asked.

FL. "Yes; even our bishops."

TEC. "What! your bishops have wives!!"

FL. "Certainly." Read 1 Tim. iii. "A bishop must be the husband of one wife," &c.

Having read half through the chapter, he said, "We make some difference in our estimation of

the Gospels and St Paul, and gave me to understand they scarcely acknowledge his Epistles as canonical. Soon after he left me, one of his scholars, to whom I had given a Testament, brought it back, saying his master had forbidden him to keep it.

Among the provisions ordered by the King with the "*good house*" was some wine. It proved even less like the order than the house. On opening it, in the hope that it would prove serviceable in restoring the strength of the invalids, they found *vinegar* had been substituted. "Deceit," says the Journal, "is the besetting sin of the Abyssinians." They were to have a new and most disagreeable proof of it soon.

On the 30th came an order to go the King at Gondar. The persons employed by the Shûm to collect mules and asses for the journey made money by giving back to the owners all that had been promised. On preparing to start, therefore, they found no means of transport, and the day was spent in quarrelling. Late in the evening, however, a mule and two asses were brought, and Flad, accompanied by Mayer, still suffering from fever, commenced a miserable journey in the rainy season. Swollen rivers had to be crossed—morasses, in which their beasts "stuck fast in the mire"—vermin at the resting-places, destroying rest—no wonder there was some depression of spirits. "O Lord!" on one occasion we find in the Journal, "refresh my heart with the dew from above as thou refreshest the earth.

"Spirit of Life ! come from above,
O Thou eternal, faithful God,

Bring to my heart, thou heavenly dove,
The comforts of Thy holy Word.
May unction, patience, love, and light
Chase away my gloomy night !”

Suffering so, that sometimes he could scarcely sit his mule, the missionary continued his journey, arriving at Gondar, at the house of the Abuna,—

August 5.—He spoke much of his resolution to build a school at Gondar, at which Arabic, Ethiopic, and Coptic should be taught. He said, also, he thought of employing Madrakal, an Arabic teacher.*

One hurried interview with the King, at which nothing passed “except the usual salutations, was all the result of this long and distressing journey.” On the very next day Flad had “a vehement attack of intermitting fever, with a painful abscess in the neck, so that I could not leave the house, nor see the King, who departed on the 13th with his soldiers, leaving orders for us with the Abuna to come with all our effects to Gondar.”

Accordingly, Flad determined to go back to the brethren, leaving, at his request, Mayer with the Abuna, who wished for his services “in cultivating his garden, and

* Madrakal was an Abyssinian, educated at the Malta Protestant College. “For four years,” Bishop Gobat testifies of him, “he had laboured faithfully in Abyssinia, amid much poverty and privation. I wish I could employ him, for he is worthy. But, under my present pecuniary circumstances, I dare not undertake it.” Could the bishop be enabled to employ him his experience of the country would be very valuable, and the excellent education the college has given him be turned to good account.—ED.

making a veranda to his house." The journey commenced on the 15th under miserable auspices. Ill of fever, he was overtaken by a violent thunder-storm, and "wet through and through;" and before night had to be dragged through a swollen torrent, the Gebasa "holding on with both hands to the wattled door of a house on which the luggage was placed to be carried over." It was a sad sort of navigation for a man ill of fever, but "necessity can break iron. Oh, how could I thank God enough, when I was at last enabled to warm myself at the fire, in the house of the hospitable Kidana, and satisfy my hunger! I had eaten nothing since yesterday morning."

The account of these simple people is very interesting. The country was flooded, and they pressed him to remain with them for a fortnight at least. But on the 20th the abscess broke, and thus, one great cause of suffering being removed, he continued his journey.

"Kidana and his wife," pursues Mr Flad, "are peaceable, pious, and devoted people. They are well spoken of by all. She attends me like a mother, declaring it is all for Christ's sake, who commands us to be careful to entertain strangers. When I spoke to him about man's sinfulness and need of redemption, he told me that when young he had been very wicked; that he had lived in fornication, as most Abyssinians do, but that about fifteen years ago he had reformed; that he and his wife were Bala-Korban: *i.e.*, living in legitimate wedlock, and that together they frequented the church, and received the Lord's Supper."

On the 22d Flad rejoined his brethren at Bata, and found them all recovered.

As soon as he returned, Ticklé, mentioned before, came, intent on proving the obligation of circumcision. Considering he is reputed a learned man, the conversation affords a fair specimen of the state of religion and intellect in the country :

He thought the point proved by St Luke ii. We argued this was not a command but a narrative ; that Christ being “born under the law,” was of course circumcised, but that this was no proof that we should be so too. Besides, St Paul says, Gal. v., “If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing.” On this he said, “leave out St. Paul,* I do not accept him.” “Well,” I said, “if you do not accept St Paul, I shut my book ; I have done with you. Nor can I esteem you to be a priest—for a priest cannot despise the Word of God.” I spoke to him earnestly, and to my great grief got rather irritated. When I became silent, he said—“Well, I will hear what St Paul says.” On which I read Gal. v. vi. with him, and St Matt. xxviii. 20, as a proof that our Lord commanded his apostles to teach and baptize, but not to circumcise. I then shewed him, from Acts vii., that the first Abyssinian Christian was only baptized. We, however, made no impression ; he only laughed, as if it was an indifferent matter.

* The priests very generally appear, by the Journal, to undervalue St Paul. On another occasion an old priest said, “St Paul is of no use for us—he is for you, the English. St Mark is ours ; St Mark and the ecclesiastical fathers are sufficient for us.”—ED.

Till the close of the year the missionaries were in a very unsettled state. On January the 2d, 1857, we find them all at Gondar. During the intervening period they had many opportunities of preaching the gospel, and it was during the same time that they first came into communication with the Falasha. They complain much of the deceitful character of the people. The debteras, for instance, as they found at last, were in the habit of coming, some as many as three times over, in different dresses, and under different names, to get books, which, when they succeeded in obtaining, they sold. And, as their acquaintance with the priests improved, they found no reason to form a better estimate than the people themselves, who declared, "our priests are no good priests—they do not instruct us in the gospel." They found them impressed with a sad idea that the "power of the keys" conferred a species of immunity from guilt; for, having detected a priest in flagrant falsehood, and warned him "that all liars must have their portion with the father of lies," he answered, laughing scornfully, "we are followers of the apostles; whether we commit fornication or perjury it matters not, since the power of the keys is in our hands." "Such is the language," says Flad, "of numbers among them; and when I sometimes indulge a hope for Abyssinia, the monks, priests, and debteras always rise up before my mind, as incorrigible themselves, and the opponents of any good influence we may exercise on others. I fear they are enemies of the truth, and of the cross of Christ. I took occasion once to express my opinion to them very

plainly, on their great moral inferiority to the Jews. They assert them to be wizards and cannibals—eating men by some secret process of sorcery. ‘In truth,’” I said, “‘I love the Falashas more than I do you, for their works are better and more godly than yours.’” (I proved this by instances). “I respect them too, because they are descendants of the ancient people of God, who has given them glorious promises, which are yet to be fulfilled. When our fathers were yet heathen, theirs were worshippers of the true God. And, remember, Abraham, and David, and Solomon were Falashas themselves.” An old man who stood by, broke out into loud exclamations—“Such a thing I never heard—David a Falasha! “Yes, my friend,” I said, “and the man after God’s own heart, too.” He struck his head with both hands, again exclaiming, “David a Falasha! David a Falasha!! Such a thing our priests never tell us.” “Well,” I said, “the Bible tells it you.” “You are a man of God.” was his reply.

After this period their intercourse with this interesting people was very constant, and the eagerness they evinced to possess the Bible—“their Father’s word,” as they beautifully styled it—was very gratifying. Nor did they evince any of that extreme excitement on being exhorted about Christianity, so unfortunately prevalent among Jews, in almost all other parts of the world.

The following is one out of many conversations related in the Journal:—

Dec. 24.—I conversed with a Jew well acquainted with Old Testament history. He asked, “To whom

were the words 'Let *us* make man in *our* own image,' addressed." I read St John i. 1-6 to him in explanation. He was surprised at the passage, and remarked, "We do not know how to explain the plural number in this passage." We then went on to Deut. xviii. 13-19.

FLAD. "Who is this prophet?"

FAL. "Christ."

FL. "Why do you not hear him?"

FAL. "We believe in Moses and the prophets, and keep the law; what do we want more?"

FL. "Dear friend, you are in want of everything; you have no Saviour to reconcile you to God. Be sure you are not able to fulfil the law perfectly; you are a transgressor of it, a sinner, and therefore you are cursed by the law for ever."

FAL. "It is true, I am not able to fulfil the law perfectly."

FL. "Well, God is holy, and no unreconciled sinner can stand before Him. Who will take away your sins?"

FAL. "We have sacrifices, but I know they are not sufficient."

I then began to proclaim to him Jesus Christ as the all-sufficient sacrifice for sin, and experienced in a great measure the assistance of the Lord. May He bless the conversation! When he left me he said, "If the Jews hear that friends have come to them, who love, and have brought them, the Word of their fathers, they will all come and converse with you."

This assurance proved true. The Jews came in numbers, and we distributed all the Bibles we had

remaining, but had not sufficient for all. Those who did not receive could hardly be persuaded to go away. We could only get rid of them by promising to bring in a year a fresh supply from England. Two Jewish boys, seeing we had not *Bibles* left, asked for *New Testaments*. It is quite inexplicable how the news of our giving Bibles to the Jews could have spread so quickly. It is little more than a week since we commenced, and yet they have come to us from distances of from three to five days. The Lord's name be praised that He has opened a way for His Word, among the poor despised seed of Israel, in Habesh! May He help us soon to bring a large number of Bibles to spread among His people! The servants of the Abuna blamed us for receiving the Falashas into the house, fearing lest any of them, being boudas*, should devour some of the children. They say, besides, that the Abuna will be angry at our meddling with them.

About this period the Coptic Patriarch, the spiritual head of the Abyssinian Church, arrived at Tschenda,† on a visit to the Abuna, and a mission from Saïd Pacha to the King. Important results ensued from this visit, as will presently appear.

* Sorcerers.

† Tschenda is a monastery and large town, the property of the Abuna. It is chiefly inhabited by Coptic Christians, and most of the Abunas are buried there. There are, however, a good number of both Jews and Mohammedans. A rabbi resides here, who is said to be an accomplished and amiable man, deeply skilled in the Ethiopic language. The Abuna was willing to allow the missionaries to settle here.—ED.

At Gondar, on January 6, was celebrated the Abyssinian Christmas.* “It well deserves,” says the Journal, “its Amharic name ‘Baal,’” which is the word in that language for a festival. During the whole night all were in the churches. In the morning, at sunrise, they commenced slaughtering cattle, the flesh of which they eat raw, drinking immoderately. It is a common saying among them, that it is a shame on this day for an Abyssinian to be sober enough to see the sun at noon.

Immediately after this abominable festival, the missionaries resolved that one of the number, Bender, should return to Jerusalem for a large supply of Amharic Bibles and Testaments, as well as for necessities for the proposed settlement at Gondar, near Tschenda. The King’s permission was necessary for both the journey and the settlement; the Abuna’s for the latter, as the land was his private property. Accordingly, Flad and Bender set out together for the royal camp, in the Tshin-Mieda,† a little to the north of Debra Tabor. Part of the route lay through the province of Begember, which produced luxuriant crops of barley, and abounded in horses and sheep;‡ and “the fine fresh Alpine air,” writes Mr Flad, “refreshed us after the heats.” On arriving, we went at once to Mr Plowden, H.B.M.C., and Mr Bell. The former gave us one of his tents and abundant refreshments. The same evening we paid our

* The Abyssinians reckon 7349 years from the creation. They date the Nativity about the year 5500.

† Plain of Kings.

‡ Eight or nine sheep could be purchased for a dollar.

respects to the Patriarch and the Abuna. With the latter we settled everything to our satisfaction, and got permission from the former for Bender to join his party on his return to Cairo. It only remains now to secure the King's leave, with whom we hope to have an audience to-morrow. The consul encouraged us to hope that we should succeed, and that the King would be willing to contribute £100 for the expenses of the journey, in order to facilitate the arrival of some workmen, with their tools, whom Bishop Gobat was endeavouring to procure for him. On the morning of the 12th I was called to the King, but the business in hand made our affairs be put aside for the time. He had quarrelled with the Patriarch and Abuna; imprisoned them in a house which he had so surrounded with thorns that none could approach; taken away all their attendants but five, disarmed all the Copts, and quartered them with Abyssinians, and set a guard of soldiers over them. As far as we could gather, the reasons of all this were as follows:—The Patriarch, wishing to return to Egypt, had asked of the King a mitre for himself, to procure which he had brought considerable wealth with him. He also solicited the King to write a friendly letter to Saïd, Pacha of Egypt, and send him presents, requesting him to restore to the Patriarch some Christian Copts, whom he had taken for soldiers; and, lastly, that he (the King) would send all English and Germans out of the country, in return for which he would send him thirty workmen from Egypt, with various other presents. The Abuna, on his part, had demanded of the King the

liberation of all captives, and permission for himself to accompany the Patriarch to Cairo, another Abuna being sent from thence to supply his place. This is all I could learn, but there were certainly other things ; and the impression made on the King's mind was, that the Patriarch was in the interest of Saïd Pacha, and had nothing else in view than to bring Abyssinia into his power. When, therefore, the next day Mr Bell spoke to the King on our behalf, he sent us kind salutations, but orders not to return to Gondar, till he had settled his difficulties with the fathers. To Mr Bell he said, "I look on them, as well as on Mr Plowden and yourself, as my friends, and you and they shall be witnesses how these fathers deal with me."

We were almost immediately summoned to the royal quarters. We found all the soldiers drawn out ; and when we entered, the King received us in the most distinguished manner ; and, turning to the assembly, said, "These are sincere friends of mine. They seek our welfare, and have brought us Bibles and Testaments in our own language. But one holy father (the Patriarch) is come as a merchant and ambassador, asking for wax and ivory, and mules and zebal, &c., and for friendship with the Mohammedans, and advises me to send all Europeans, whom I love, out of the country." To a number of priests who were assembled, imploring for the liberation of the Patriarch and Abuna, he caused a letter to be read, which they had drawn up for him to send, as from himself, to the Pacha, and dismissed them, saying, "Consider this letter, and the

intentions of my fathers, and you will see I do not wrong them. I am Christ's servant. He made me king, and gave me the victory over all my enemies. I am labouring, for His honour, to protect our Church against Mohammedans ; and, by His power, I endeavour to lead all heathens around me to Christianity. But he (the Patriarch) comes asking for a mitre, and to make us subjects of Saïd Pacha. But, God helping me, as long as I have life I will keep down the Patriarch, the Bishop, and Saïd Pacha—yea, even the Queen of England, should she help him. If I wrong them, may God hear their prayers, and give them wings to escape over the hedge that surrounds them. Then I will repent. These Englishmen" (pointing to the consul, Mr Bell, and us) "are my friends, and have good intentions towards me, I know. They shall be my witnesses ; and I will send accounts to all the Courts of Europe, and they shall judge of my conduct." His Majesty spoke with great vehemence and excitement.

He then sent us with some Abyssinians to seize all the money, dresses, &c. of the Patriarch. It was very disagreeable to us to be employed on such a service ; but, in the King's present mood, we dare not refuse. Why have we come into the camp at this troubled time ? Lord, Thou knowest. The dresses of the Patriarch were carried into the church, his jewels and money into the royal tent. The latter, to his Majesty's astonishment, amounted to 1002 napoleons. This, but for the earnest remonstrances of his grandees and

counsellors, and the British consul, he would instantly have distributed among the poor.

During five days the incarceration of the prelates continued, and there were many interviews. On the 16th, the differences were composed, and a high festival of reconciliation was held in the camp. The whole army and nearly a thousand priests and debteras were assembled. We were also called. Before all, the King confessed that he had erred—that he had been instigated by the devil—but was now ready to humble himself, and seek reconciliation with his fathers. He then sent a messenger to them, begging pardon and reconciliation. On the return of the messenger with a kind answer, he ordered all the barriers to be removed, went himself, and, kneeling, confessed his error, and begged for pardon. The royal crown was then brought forth, and consecrated by the Patriarch. He then consecrated the King, and crowned him Emperor of Abyssinia. The state chairs of the Patriarch and Abuna, which had been seized, with the rest of their property, were then brought, carried by the King himself, and restored to them. The whole assembly then went in grand procession to the royal tent.

Still the King's mind was not entirely satisfied. He therefore commanded a Testament, an image of Christ, wearing the crown of thorns, and a picture of the Trinity, to be brought out of the church, and caused both to swear by them, in presence of the whole assembly, that their intentions towards him were good and faithful. The Patriarch, with great eloquence,

asserted his love and loyalty, and solemnly blessed, first the King, and then the people. His address to them he concluded with the following strange expression:—"Never forsake the Alexandrian faith—cleave to it steadfastly. You will be saved by it; and if not, I will go to hell instead of you."

I thought I could see the Abuna was by no means satisfied. But the whole scene touched my heart. I was especially moved by the King's address, particularly where he said, "I am the servant of Christ, called by Him to the throne, and desiring only to do His will—to protect the Abyssinian Church, and to extend it among the heathen nations."

In the evening the Abuna sent for me. He was full of joy, and very kind, as was the Patriarch also. I asked pardon for the part I had been obliged to take. He replied that he could perfectly place himself in my position, and that I was quite right to obey the King. "I believe," he said, "you love me—and I love you. You are my only friendly acquaintance in Abyssinia." He then entered at large on the vexation and annoyance every Abyssinian prince had caused him.

Two days subsequent to these events, January 18, the annual feast of the Baptism of Jesus was celebrated. On the previous evening, the tent-church of the camp, with the tabot, was carried by the King, the Patriarch, the Abuna, and the soldiers, to a neighbouring stream. At sunrise, every one who could went to the water; and as soon as the Church-service was ended, the tabot was carried to the bank. It was washed in the stream,

and then, as well as the stream, consecrated by the Abuna, by which they believe that the Holy Ghost descends into the stream, as He came down at the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan. Immediately all, young and old, threw themselves into the water. The Lord's Supper was then celebrated; after which the tabot was carried, with great pomp, and the firing of cannon, and music and dancing, back to the camp.

January 27.—To-day the King, who has not yet given us the permission we have sought to return to Gondar, sent us compliments through Mr Bell, saying, "Be not afraid that I keep you here so long. I look upon you as my friends. Since Mr Bender is preparing to return to Jerusalem, and I wish to send a gift to the bishop, Samuel Gobat, and to his wife, you must wait till the affair with the Patriarch is finally settled. Then I will send you off with honour."

February 8.—Plans are all changed. Mr Bell having got the King's permission for himself and Mr Consul Plowden to go to the baths of Wansaje,* asked leave for us to return to Gondar. He ordered him instead to carry us with him to the baths. Mr Bender, who is suffering from fever, declined the journey; but I, who am suffering from an abscess on my foot, for which the waters are thought good, avail myself of it.

Saturday, 14.—We arrived at the baths yesterday. The second night of our journey we passed at Arango,

* A warm, sulphurous spring, of the temperature of 108 deg., much and successfully used by the Abyssinians in all sorts of cutaneous disorders.

about half-way down the heights of Bagemder, where are the ruins of a church and castle, built by King Amticzan. I had a long conversation with a Galla, from Gumma. The Gadderu-Gallas have lately sent three horses to the King, as a token of friendship. It is said that this tribe has never been subdued by any Abyssinian king. The consul and Mr Bell went fishing with great success. The method is curious:—They threw a madega* and a-half of the bruised fruit of the Berbera tree into the water. Very soon the fish came to the surface, rolling about as if intoxicated, and were easily taken in nets and baskets, to the number of about a hundred.

Tuesday, 17.—Left for Guramba, another hot spring, of the temperature of 127 deg. Abyssinia is very rich in these springs. At Melsha, a small province in the south of Zana Sum, there are no less than seven, of various temperatures and mineral qualities.

The next day orders arrived for Mr Bender to join the King at his camp. He complied, and had the satisfaction of finding his brother-labourer perfectly recovered; and two days after they, with a Mr Coffin, were invited to the royal tent. The interview is thus described:—

“As we sat quietly in the forepart of the tent, the King said, ‘Why are you so quiet, my children? Do not be afraid. Am I not your father? I am king; but in God’s eyes we are all equal. You are servants of Christ; so am I. I am king; but there is another

* Madega, a measure containing about a bushel.

king over me, that is Christ.'—'Yes, sir,' I replied, 'you are king, and, I believe, ordained of God, but only over our bodies; Christ is king of our souls. There is no respect of persons with Him. We are all sinners; but He has redeemed us from our sins, having bought us with His precious blood, that we should live unto Him. Thus we are His servants.'—On this the King exclaimed, 'Hunat! Hunat!!' (truth.)"

Towards the close of the conversation, which was a long one, the King gave evidence of the deep attention he had paid:—

"For when the interpreter was about to repeat what I had said, he stopped him, saying, 'Thou didst not well understand, Martin.' I will repeat his words, 'O Martin! Martin! thou knowest well the Holy Book.' He then repeated all I had said, and dismissed us. Before taking leave, I asked permission to go to Gondar. 'Be not over anxious, my children,' he replied; 'as soon as Likmaguas and Mr Plowden come, I will tell you all my heart.'"

After being kept in attendance following the movements of the camp for some time, the desired permission was at length granted; and, on the 3d March, Mr Flad again arrived at Gondar. He gives the following characteristic account of the King's movements, while relating his wanderings with him:—

"The King gives his confidence to no one; he never says what he is about to do. If he is going to undertake a military expedition, and attack his enemies, he

orders his Hawalsh (herald) to proclaim through the camp, 'Prepare provisions for so many days.' When the day he has fixed for setting out arrives, he mounts his mule, and all follow, no one knowing whither."

Monday, 23.—I have been engaged lately on some manual labour for the King and the Abuna. But still our missionary work has been continued. We have had many conversations with the priests and debteras, on the great points of justification by faith, and the great worth of God's Word in the vulgar tongue. We were much surprised yesterday at seeing none of the debteras of the Church of Kedus Gabriel, who frequented us most, and whom brother Kienzlen had taken particular pains with. On inquiry, we were told that the Alaca had threatened to excommunicate all who came to us. We therefore sent him our salutations, and asked his reasons. He returned answer, "I have nothing against you, except that you do not serve our Church, nor adore our tabot, nor kiss our churches, nor take the Holy Supper with us." Shortly after, he came himself. He said, "I have nothing against you; but my pupils become negligent in their studies and attendance at church. For long they have been accustomed to spend nearly the whole day with you, so I have been obliged to threaten them with excommunication to bring them to order!" Knowing well this was a mere excuse, we told him, "We cannot kiss your churches, nor adore your tabot, since we believe it contrary to the Bible, and therefore sinful. As to not serving your Church, we believe we have served it more than

yourselves ; for we have distributed 500 copies of the Scriptures among your people, in a language they can understand. That serving the Church means giving you dollars, garments, and church utensils, we cannot think ; and our reason for going so seldom to church on Sundays and festivals is, that you perform the service in a language nobody understands. Such service does not please God, because it does not instruct, nor lead the people to God. If you will pray, and sing, and read the Bible in the Amharic, we will attend your services. As for the Holy Supper, if you will shew us your opinions, and that they are conformable to the Word of God, we will not hesitate to commemorate with you." He made no reply, but his manner indicated great dislike to us, arising, no doubt, from our having often protested against the errors of the Abyssinian Church—viz., that fasting, almsgiving, and donations to churches and monasteries justify us before God, and give us a meritorious claim to heaven. Brother Mayer was expelled out of the Abuna's court the other day, for no other reason than that he did not observe the Abyssinian fasts, nor adore the tabot, nor kiss the churches, nor had given donations to them.

When I look at the blindness and ignorance of this people, and see how they are misled by their leaders, my heart is deeply moved, and I feel ready to undergo anything to do them good ; but then, when I look at the power and influence of the priests, my heart fails me. We have taught much last year, and, through God's Word, wrought conviction in many hearts ; but

what has been the end with most of them? They have consulted their priests, and their exhortations, and some quotations from *their* holy books, have pulled down what we built up. O Lord, thou hast said, "Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out." Deal thus with this people!

February 26.—As a specimen of the ridiculous reports spread about us, I give the following:—Marcha Warke told us to-day that the priest of the Church of Kedus Gabriel had complained of us, for receiving Falashas, and reading the Bible with, *and administering to them the Lord's Supper!* "When you sing," he said, "at your morning prayers, they believe you celebrate the Holy Supper. I have been endeavouring to convince them they are wrong, but to no purpose; they believe one of you is a priest."

February 27.—The bad effect of this opinion (at least, we think so) appears to-day. We have received a letter from the Abuna, saying we must leave the house he had lent us here, as he wanted it for himself and the Patriarch, when he comes to Gondar. He offers his land at Gondar, to build on for ourselves, well knowing we are ordered by the King not to leave Gondar. We have succeeded in hiring a house for eight dollars per annum. It is the property of Woldero Sahlé Trungo, who is said to be a kinswoman of the King.

April 13.—We are advised by Mr Plowden, lest Gondar should be attacked by the rebels, to remove our things into one of the churches, and to be in readiness for a flight to Dembea. The Governor and

the Abuna are said already to have removed part of their property into the church for safety.

April 14.—A Jew, Za Jasu, came to-day, a second time, a journey of four days, to beg for a Bible. Seeing his earnestness, we spared him one of our house Bibles ; and as they are now celebrating the Passover, I read with him the history of the Exodus.

April 21.—Last Sunday was the Abyssinian Easter. On the Friday before, every one went to church ; but the worship seemed to be little more than making as many genuflections, and as rapidly as possible, to the four quarters of the heavens. He who could accomplish three hundred acquired great merit. The slaughtering of animals for the eight days' feast succeeding the fast, commenced soon after sunrising on Sunday. We had great difficulty in making our servants slay their animals on Saturday. They pleaded their priests' forbidding them to eat on the feast, meat killed during the fast. We set against this God's command to rest on the Sabbath. They yielded, but were much displeased.

May 22.—We have daily visitors, whom one of us makes a point of attending ; and we have many conversations, sometimes disputes. Among our frequent visitors is Mr —, a man of most excellent moral character, but a rationalist. When, lately, the text, "This a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," was quoted, he said that the faithfulness of the saying was very questionable ; that we ought not to believe what does not commend itself to human reason—and

therefore it was impossible to believe Christ to be God ; that He was only a man, a teacher of the law ; and that man did not need a Redeemer. " Whatever," he said, " in the gospel does not agree with my reason, I reject. In such cases, I believe the writers have added to God's revelation, his own notions—Jews and Mohammedans will be saved just as well as Christians. They all believe in God, and he who does so must be saved, or God would be unjust."

Our hopes as to establishing a mission are not very bright ; and we fear, unless we consent to work for the King, we shall not be allowed to stay long.

Monday, June 1.—This is a day of mourning in Gondar. Walda Kedana Mariam is dead, of whom they say, " Za Gondar amba mota," (the fortress of Gondar is dead.) They speak much in his praise. " He was a father to the poor, kept churches in repair, and restored the holy vessels, and often kept off the rebels by great sacrifices." His property is said to be worth 60,000 dollars, 160 mules, and 40 slaves. These he freed before death, giving to each 15 dollars. He has bequeathed 5 dollars to each of the 44 churches in Gondar. I may mention here some of the Abyssinian funeral ceremonies. Interment generally takes place a few hours after death. The body, if of a rich man, is buried in a coffin ; if of a poor man, in a mat or skin. The priests come immediately after the death to pray over the corpse, perfume it with incense, and cross it. They also incense the grave. The women sing a dirge, and perform a funeral dance, to the hollow-sounding

strokes of a drum, before the house. The relations and intimate friends sit on the ground in the court of the house, and utter doleful cries, rubbing their temples with a sort of coarse cloth, till the blood comes, and beating their faces with their shoes, and even with stones. They often carry the marks of this treatment for months. The funeral procession halts seven times for offering prescribed prayers, and singing appointed psalms. After seven days the friends and relations have a great meeting for lamentation, but also to eat and drink, each one bringing his provisions with him, as during that season of sorrow nothing is ground, baked, or cooked in the house. Prayers continue to be offered for the dead for thirty, forty, or fifty days. After this, the tarkar (great festival) is celebrated, at which the deceased is absolved from all his sins, and declared to be released from purgatory. To the priests and debteras at the feast, the words of our Lord are often very applicable :—" Woe unto you ——, which devour widows' houses ;" for many, who had property before, are, after it, found to have become poor.

June 19.—We have experienced nothing worth relating of late ; few visits. Men's minds are so disquieted for fear of the rebels in Tigré. One of their leaders got possession of the province of Woggera, and is preparing to march on Gondar. All have been busy, ourselves among the number, in securing property in the churches, and all are longing for the return of the King, who is reported to be on the march.

June 21.—Visited to-day two Copts, who are with

the Abuna. One of them shewed me a letter from the Patriarch, in which he writes,—“The King has conquered the Walloes, leaving a Christian governor. Many of them have been baptized.* The King intends to convert all the Mohammedans, Jews, Kamants, and Gallas. Within twenty days we shall come to Gondar, and then return to Cairo.” I do not know how far this news may be trusted.

July 13.—For some days Gondar has been in a state of excitement, on account of Warringje, the rebel chief who invaded Woggera. We commit ourselves to God, who says, “Fear not, I am with thee.” Warringje had made peace with Alga Tashu, Governor of Woggera, and Bal Ambra Warkelul, intending, when he could find opportunity, to make them prisoners. A friend of the Governor’s, who was in the rebel camp, betrayed the plot, and a battle ensued, in which Warringje gained the victory. He is reported to be on his way to attack Gondar. Mr Plowden has advised us to flee to Woechne; but the fever is raging there—we have, therefore, decided to remain. Should the danger grow imminent, we shall, with our friend, the Alaca Habeta Selasse, take refuge in the Etchegua’s church, which the rebels have always hitherto spared, out of respect to the Etchegua’s chair.

July 22.—The most contradictory reports come daily from the rebel army. The day before yesterday the Abuna fled, with ten slaves of the Patriarch’s, to Tschenda; and to-day the town was thrown into confu-

* They are Mohammedans.

sion by the arrival of Alga Tashu, with six hundred soldiers, flying before the rebels. The whole town rose against them. They refused, however, to depart, till threatened with excommunication by the priests, on which they retired quietly.

July 25.—Had a long conversation with Gebra Jesus to-day. He always leaves a good impression on my mind. He is learned, but humble, modest, and willing to be instructed in the best things; but sadly superstitious withal. He defends the ceremony of kissing churches; yet when I said, "Kiss Jesus, by a holy obedience, and you will be dearer to Him than if you kissed daily all the doors and windows of all the forty-four churches in Gondar," he replied, "This is true—I believe it;" still he pleaded for the custom. We then got on the adoration of the saints. "They themselves," I said, "disapprove of your doing so."—See Rev. xix. 10.

GEBRA JESUS. "But to get at a king or great man, we need a balderata.* If, then, St Michael, or St Phanuel will be my balderata, and I ask them to pray to God to forgive me, I believe I do no wrong."

FLAD. "Does a child need a balderata with his father?"

GEBRA JESUS. "No; surely not."

FLAD. "Well, if the child *did* go to a balderata, and beg him to intercede, what would the father think?"

GEBRA JESUS. "He would feel ill disposed towards his child."

* Usher.

FLAD. "This is just your case. God is your Father, and yet you call on some one to speak to Him for you, and that, too, while Jesus—God's own Son, and your dearest Brother—has promised to do this for you." (1 Tim. ii. 5; 1 John ii. 1.) "Besides, is there any one omniscient, omnipresent, all-seeing, but God?"

GEBRA JESUS. "No, sir."

FLAD. "Well, then, by this you confess your balderata cannot hear your prayer, or those of the many thousands who are calling on him, at the same moment. If he could, he would be omnipresent, &c., and so equal to God. Would it not be better to choose Him for your balderata, who is God, and appointed of God for this very thing, the Lord God, Jesus Christ?"

"Yea, yea," he said, smiling; "you have always something to say against us."

July 27.—As a specimen of what we have to contend with, in our efforts to enlighten the ignorance of the priesthood, I record the following:—I had a long discussion with Eostateous, a priest and monk, who asserted as facts: 1. A small piece of the true cross, said to have been buried in the Walloo country, wrought many miracles. 2. Tecla Haimanout still performs miracles in Habesh. 3. The devil is found to keep at the distance of forty paces from every one who wears a cross. 4. Christ did not die for the Jews, but only for the Gentiles. 5. True Christians are only to be found in Habesh. 6. The Abyssinians became Christians before Christ died. 7. Christ baptized, and wrought many miracles when he was in Egypt; among others He

baptized, and restored his sword to the malefactor who was pardoned on the cross, he being at that time a robber in Egypt.

July 29.—Glad tidings have reached Gondar to-day. The rebels of Woggera have quarrelled among themselves, and fought with one another, and Warringje has taken to flight. All cause for apprehension is now removed. Praised be the Lord who has mercifully delivered this city and province from the danger that threatened it!

August 13.—We visited to-day the Church of Kosquam, one of the noblest in Gondar. It was erected by one Queen Etjegie Matowe, and is a monument of what Abyssinia owes to the Portuguese. The walls are covered with images of saints. There are also representations of God the Father, as an old man with a white beard; of God the Son, sometimes as a handsome young man, sometimes as a babe in the arms of Mary; and of God the Holy Ghost, as a dove hovering. There are also some relics of the founder: an alga,* a wantsha,† a bishop's mitre, and a coffin, covered with Russia leather. I returned with Wandafrash, a servant of the Abuna, with whom I had a long discussion on the profit of fasting. I tried to convince him, as I always do when on this subject, that it is a useful exercise; but that no man, as the Abyssinians believe, can acquire righteousness or merit heaven on account of it.

Our visit to the church brought on a long discussion about images. For in the evening, Debtera Dasta

* Bedstead, or sofa. † A drinking-cup of horn.

called, and inquired how we liked the church, and if there were any such in our land?

"Perhaps there are," I said; "still we do not make the house of God a temple of idols, as you do. Your people use these images as idols, for they kiss and adore them."

"Unlearned people do," he said, "but learned men see in them only memorials of sacred history, which is no sin."

"But remember," I replied, "God has forbidden you to make, or bow down to, any graven image, or likeness of anything in heaven, or earth, or water. How do you understand these words?"

"God has, indeed, said so," he answered; "but it is the custom of our land to adore images, and it seems to me that it is not very wrong."

"Surely that is scarcely to be questioned," I said. "I feel sure you do wrong. In this, as in other things, you have departed from the Word of God. Neither Christ nor His apostles have recommended to us the worship of saints; and the early Christians had no images. It was not till after the third century, when Christians began to fall from the love of God and true religion, and forgot that the true worshippers must worship the Father *in spirit and in truth*, that they began to use images."

He candidly admitted all this, and ended our conversation by saying, "This is true—you are right; we must teach our people better."

August 19.—A fresh disturbance in Woggera has

given us an opportunity of noticing how in some things the Abyssinians observe, but in a perverted way, Jewish legal customs. The rebels, who had fallen out among themselves, made it up, and jointly appointed a governor over Woggera, and made an inroad into the province of Semien. Two of Alga Tashu's soldiers, however, murdered him, and fled for safety to the monastery of Gondar. If a murderer flies to a monastery, and rings a bell appointed for the purpose, the priests protect him, and he can only be delivered up to the avenger of blood, after the murder has been proved, and he refuses to pay the price of blood. He is generally, however, induced to promise payment, by being refused communion. If he has not the money, he is placed in the custody of one of the relations of the dead, who compels him to travel from market to market, and town to town, and house to house, crying, "Ja nass—ja nass!"* People contribute liberally in such cases. I have seen women give away their necklaces and rings.

August 28.—I had an interesting interview with Mamher Waldu, head of the priests of the Church Kedus Georges. We read Rom. iv. v., and Gal. v. I spoke with him about "faith that worketh by love;" and how, as is proved by the examples of Abraham and David, it is the only thing that "availeth." I found him sober-minded and honest, and without prejudice—rare in an Abyssinian. Moreover, when I inquired about his views of original sin, in reference to the verse, "as

* For my life—for my life.

by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, because that all have sinned," I found them much the same as ours. But I had a curious instance, somewhat of a similar sort to that related (June 27) before, of the way in which even the best among the Abyssinian priests allow foolish traditions and glosses to take the place of simple Scripture. I asked him what were their views about man's fall? The simple Bible history was perverted and put forth thus,—When Adam and Eve dwelt in innocence in Paradise, the devil, under the form of a serpent, seduced Eve into eating of a certain fig-tree, which God had forbidden. She persuaded her husband to eat with her; but when he was on the point of swallowing the fruit, he remembered God's command, and spat it out. Hence the swelling on the throat of all males. They were then driven out of Paradise, which so affected Adam that he wept for one hundred years. Eve gave birth to twins twice—first to Cain and his sister, then to Abel and his—and each was to marry his twin. But it happened that Abel's sister-wife was more beautiful than Cain's, who envied his brother, but did not know how to get his wife for himself. The devil therefore came to him, and advised him to put his brother to death. He replied, "How?—death! What is death?" "Come," said Satan, "and I will shew you." He therefore took him into a field, and placed a raven before him, saying, "Take this stone, and strike the raven on the head with it." Cain obeyed, and struck the bird dead. "Do in like

manner," said the devil, "to thy brother." Cain did so, and Abel died. Thus death entered. Adam, when he saw this, was so afflicted, that he wept again for one hundred years.

August 29.—To-day we witnessed a melancholy scene. It is the festival of Tecla Haimanout. The people, about two hundred in number, stood in the church, with pots full of water. These were blessed and consecrated with the prayer of Tecla Haimanout, and are believed to cure all diseases. Sick persons wash themselves with it.

We have many visitors; but I have learned by experience that nothing is gained by disputes on the points wherein we differ. I am persuaded that missionary work will be best promoted in Abyssinia by the free circulation of the Amharic Bible and Testament throughout the country, and by reading it *to* the unlearned and *with* the learned, adding always a few simple and practical explanations.

It is strange how superstitions gain credit, in spite of experience of their falsity. The following may well be classed with that about the healing power of the water, mentioned above. On the western side of Gondar stands the ruins of a church built by King Vasil. A solitary monk has been residing there for the last two years. For the last six days some Gondar debteras have shut themselves up in it, engaged in praying the prayer of St Ephraim, day and night. They believe that on the seventh day the water in the vessel, over which this prayer is offered, boils; it is

then drank, and is considered as a preventative against forgetting what they have learned already, and as insuring their learning with great facility for the future, and lastly, that it will make them share in the wisdom of St Ephraim the Syrian.

September 7.—To-day they celebrate the festival of the angel Raphael, one of the greatest in the calendar. He is believed to open all the doors of heaven, of which he is porter, that God's blessing may come down on the earth, and all the fruits of the field. Earth is consecrated in the church, to be used as medicine, and to *drive away mice*. Rain, falling to-day, is believed to possess a healing quality. Some *did* fall; and all our household stood out in it, half undressed, and collected it in vessels, to wash themselves with.

September 8.—We have a pleasing account to-day of the Galla, from Walda Georgis, a debtera of the Church of Bata Maream. He says they are hard of belief, and would need one who could work miracles to preach to them. They are very hospitable, and a stranger could live safely among them, were he a good and righteous man. They would love him as Wak.* An openly profligate person would be in danger. This character is important to us. Uncertain as we are about the possibility of establishing a mission among the Christians in Abyssinia, it is well to know there is such a people, who would receive us kindly, and where there would be no obstacle, on the King's part, to our settlement.

September 24.—Last Saturday we sent two of our ser-

* God.

wants to the King with a letter (as much in the Abyssinian style as we could), and some pieces of work I had prepared for his Majesty. Seeing we cannot secure a fixed position in Abyssinia unless we work for him, we have determined to offer him our services. We think that, by occasionally giving him our labours, we shall have the opportunity of exercising a Christian influence over a number of Abyssinian lads, and instructing them in many useful things. For a long time we have struggled with difficulties, seeking for some way of establishing a mission. The very first thing to be done is to acquire the entire confidence of the King, in order to which we must come into close contact with him, (which we shall do by working for him), and exhibit a Christian conversation before him and all. We commit our plans to God, praying Him to order our course for us. We are encouraged by the remembrance that St Paul wrought for his support while he preached the gospel. Our letter, literally translated, was as follows:—

“This letter is sent by Messrs Flad, Bender, Mayer, and Kienzlen, to the King of Kings, Theodorus.— Since we had the honour of taking leave of your Majesty, till now, how did you do? How did you pass the rainy season? By your God, we are in the enjoyment of good health, and living in the district of the Etchegua, in Gondar. I, Flad, have made for your Majesty three holsters, a cartridge-box, a game-bag, and one for your son. When your Majesty was at Gondar, it was your royal pleasure that we should work for you, according to our capacities and skill; but

you have hitherto given us no orders about what we are to do for you. We therefore remained quiet. The works we can do are—Bender, masonry; Mayer, gardening; Kienzlen, carpentry. Your Majesty told us formerly to wait for you in Gondar, and that at your return you would be pleased to tell us your heart. Our money is diminished. Bender wishes to go to Jerusalem to fetch some. If your Majesty has anything to send thither, or wishes for anything from thence, be pleased to favour us with your commands.

“The reader of this letter will bow himself for us.”

October 17.—I have suffered dreadfully since 17th of September. It began with violent toothache; and one day, our shoes being all worn out, we resolved to go barefoot, as the people here generally do. I caught cold, which brought on a metat, as the Abyssinians call it—*i. e.*, a tumor in my neck and right-jaw; so that for many days I could swallow no solid food. To-day brother Kienzlen opened it with a lancet, which has relieved the intolerable pain.

A letter has come from Mr Bell, by our servants whom we sent to the King:—

“MY DEAR MR FLAD,—I presented your holsters, &c., to his Majesty, who was much pleased, and returns you many thanks. With regard to your sending brother Bender to Jerusalem, he says, ‘Wait till we meet.’ We are now going to Tigré. His Majesty says, moreover, if you wish to leave the country altogether, you are welcome; but if you wish to stay here, you must not go backward and forward, till he has arranged his affairs

with the Turks—*i. e.*, with the Coptic Patriarch of Cairo and Saïd Pacha. When that is done, you shall go backwards and forwards as you like. In the meantime, if you like to stay in my country, which his Majesty has given me, you are welcome to build houses, and do as you like.—Your sincere,

“F. F. BELL.”

Besides the letter, we had verbal greetings from the King:—“I have nothing against your people, but I have many enemies. Bender dare not go to Jerusalem alone; but if you all want to go, then come to me when I come into the neighbourhood of Gondar, and I will take leave of you. If you wish to remain, the Governor of Dembea shall supply your maintenance.” We knew what this meant—to give nothing. But we are in great difficulties; we cannot make up our minds to go, and have still some money left. Our friends explain the King’s language as an indirect expression of a will that we should go, and we fear it may be soon changed into a command. The cause of all this, as explained by Aico John* (a man in high esteem, and undoubtedly the most honoured of all the former royal family), is this:—“The King gives you to understand,” he said “that you *must* go. The reason is, that news has arrived that the English and French have taken Palestine and Egypt from the Turks. The French are to have Palestine, and the English Egypt and also Ethiopia. They are on their way to take possession of Abyssinia; their ships are already at

* Shadow-king.

Massowah." This falsehood has been spread by a Syrian, named John, a bosom friend of the King, and a bitter enemy of Europeans ; so it is to be feared the King may send all Europeans away. It is incredible how easily the most absurd reports gain credit here. Many even intelligent people still believe that Mr Isenberg *brought soldiers in his trunks among his books !*

Up to the 10th of November, the missionaries were still without any commands as to their movements. Their time was occupied with many conversations with persons of all classes, on the important truths of the gospel ; but on the 10th, Flad, who in the meantime had visited the baths of Weinsie, in company with Mr Plowden, went with him to the King at his camp, at Amora Gedal. " We found him," the journal continues, " seated on his carpet, surrounded with workmen, making bullets and gunpowder. He received us graciously, expressing the kindest sympathy on account of my tumor, which he immediately noticed, and his astonishment at what the white people could bear. ' We,' he said, ' die of the slightest ailments.' He asked me if Bender could assist in repairing a bridge. I told him he could, and Mr Bell mentioned that Kienzlen understood working in wood, and would be ready to assist in the work. He was evidently pleased, saying, ' Eshe,' (it is right.) The consul then told him that in a year Bishop Gobat would send him workmen. He made no reply to this, but inquired whether Samuel Gobat was married, and how many children he had."

After the interview I spoke with Mr Bell about our

position, and asked his opinion of the King's expressions in his letter. He said, "I know the King will not send you away, but it will be impossible for you to remain, if you go about teaching. If some of you will cultivate the ground, and others work for the King, you may remain as long as you please. You will not be able to establish a mission, any more than Jacobi,* who expended 100,000 dollars, and was driven out after all. Remain at Gondar, and when the King returns ask permission to establish a mission among the Gallas. He will, probably, consent; if not, you can then return to Jerusalem." After this interview, Flad returned to the baths, with Mr Plowden; but receiving no benefit from the waters, and Mr Plowden and Kienzlen declaring his disease to be a lymphatic gangrene, which could not be cured in Abyssinia, he returned to the camp, to urge for permission to go to Cairo. While there, he witnessed a scene very characteristic of the King.

Thursday, Nov. 18, is the festival of Kedus Michel. In the morning, the King went among the poor, lame, blind, and lepers, to distribute alms. Mr Bell reckoned the number who received alms, of from one to three pieces of salt, a dollar, clothes, a horse, or a mule, from 5000 to 6000. He is so great a benefactor to the poor, that his army is often without food in consequence of his lavish generosity. The Abuna told me,

† A Jesuit, who went about baptizing and ordaining, as if there were no church in Abyssinia, and whom the King expelled as soon as he obtained the power.

that on one occasion, when he had exhausted all he had, without being able to give to all, he sent to the Queen to beg her to give him her ornaments. She refused at first ; but he sent again, saying, " Be not troubled, my love, I will give you more beautiful ornaments, as soon as God shall give me more money." She then sent them, and he distributed them, saying to each, as he gave a portion, " Go and sell this to the goldsmiths."

I ought to have mentioned a week ago, that the King has dismissed the Patriarch, with many presents, and sends along with him an ambassador to Saïd Pacha. This facilitated my plans ; for, late in the evening, Mr Bell came to tell me that his Majesty had given me permission to go, when and where I pleased. " Martin may go," he said, " whenever and wherever he pleases. Hitherto I detained him on account of the Patriarch. I did not want any one to go to Egypt before I had settled the Egyptian affairs. Let Martin, however, remain a few days till I have prepared a letter, and present for Samuel Gobat.

Wednesday, Nov. 25.—This morning the English consul and myself were summoned to the King. On our arrival, he caused a letter to the chief officer of Customs at Gondar to be read, which contained an order to give me a mule of the best sort, and a royal saddle for Bishop Gobat ; also an Abyssinian under garment, with a light dress, for Mrs Gobat, as a gift from the Queen ; also a mule for myself. He then commanded two letters to be written, one to the Queen

of England, the other to the Bishop, which he read himself, and ordered to be sealed ; after which he dismissed us, praying God to bless me and restore my health, and commending me to His almighty protection in my journey. The orders to the chief of the Customs were very precise, that the bishop's mule should be of the very best quality. He was allowed to spend from 30 to 40 dollars in the purchase.

December 7.—After my dismissal by the King, I returned to Gondar, to prepare, and take leave of the brethren. This morning I bade farewell to many friends, who collected in the court-yard to bid me adieu. I addressed a brief exhortation to them. Quite a crowd accompanied me outside the walls, and many tears were shed. I felt much moved. I went with a heavy heart. The gloomy prospect of the mission, my illness, a deep sense of many shortcomings and sins during my residence in this country—all depressed me. I could only ejaculate, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” I turned to my Bible for comfort, and found it. The Psalm lxxxvi. revived my spirit and strengthened my faith.

March 19.—Arrived to-day at Cairo. The journey was much protracted by the Patriarch, with whom I travelled by the King's command, visiting the bishops and priests in all the villages. My gangrene is nearly quite healed. And now, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgiveth thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies !”

On the journey, I had much intercourse with Lic Mamheran Alaca Gebru Jesus, father confessor to the King, and ambassador to Saïd Pacha of Egypt, who accompanied the Patriarch. We read much of the gospel together. One of his conversations revived my hopes of the ultimate success of the mission. He made a favourable impression on me. He is not so narrow-minded and bigoted as most other learned men in Abyssinia. The chief points in the doctrine of our salvation appears to him to be the Holy Trinity, and the two natures in Christ—that He is very God and very man, in one individual person. The chief differences between us are on the subject of obligatory fasting, and the worship of the Virgin Mary. He admitted the Abyssinians were alarmed lest we, as Englishmen,* should take possession of the country. “The King,” he said, “often told me the English are good Christians, because they send many Bibles and Testaments gratuitously into our country. He is an enemy to our Gees, but a friend to your Amharic translation of the Bible. If it please God to establish him on the throne, he will banish the Gees language from our churches, and order portions of the Holy Bible to be read every Sunday and festival day to the people in the Amharic translation—only the Werdasy Marain (Song of the Virgin) will be read in Gees. He has himself made a commencement, by employing

* By Englishman an Abyssinian understands not an English subject, but a Protestant as distinct from a Frenchman, by which he understands a Roman Catholic.

a debtera to copy the Psalms out of your Bible for him, and uses them daily at prayers. I also am a friend to the Amharic language; and, if the King shall accomplish this general use of it in the churches, then I believe the people will be happy and blessed." I asked him if the King would be pleased if I came back with a fresh supply of Bibles. He raised his hand to heaven and said, "May God grant you health to do this! But then you must lay your books at the King's feet, and say, 'These I bring for you and your people.' It will give the greatest pleasure to the King if he can distribute them to the people himself; and I, if I live, will be your friend, and tell the King all the good I have heard and seen of you." My servant told me that he (the ambassador), and all the Abyssinians with him, speak well of me, and of what I have said to them. He said to my servant, "I never knew such a white man—he always speaks the truth according to the Word of God: I never heard him tell a lie—all he says is in the New Testament; he is right when he says that, in our doctrines and ceremonies, we do not conform to the Sacred Scriptures, but go contrary to them. I do, however, agree with him—we do go astray from the doctrines of the gospel." My servant on this asked, "If you know this, why do you not bring back our Church to the gospel?" "I am not able," he replied, "to do this alone, against the Abuna, the Etchegua, and the priests—they would all oppose, and condemn me as a heretic."

"And now it may perhaps be asked, What has been

done in Abyssinia? and what can be done there at present?

“I. What has been done?

“I answer, In all the provinces of Amhara, the Bible has been circulated in the vernacular tongue. Besides this, many copies have been sent into various parts of Shoa and Tigré. Many priests, who disliked and spoke against our Amharic books when we arrived in the country, now love and recommend them. Although we cannot hope that *all* the copies we have distributed are read with diligence, yet we are assured that a very large portion of them *are* read, both by the priests and their scholars. The religious conversations we held with the learned and unlearned, the high and the low, were spread far and wide, and much of our testimony was understood, received, and believed. Though we may scarcely speak of real conversion through our instrumentality, still ‘light has sprung up’ in many a soul. The extent of what God may have wrought in those souls by His Word, HE alone knows; we, as sowers, have sown the word, it is He must give the increase.

“II. What can be done at present?

“I reply, The mission can do little more at present than continue to disseminate the Word of God, always the best missionary in any country, in the vernacular tongue. It would be a great benefit to them to have a new edition of the Psalms of David printed in a small size—no book is more in request than this. And

should the King realise his intention of introducing, throughout the whole of Abyssinia, the custom of having the Bible read every Sunday and festival day to the people in the churches, then, indeed, there would be hope for Abyssinia. The influence of the priests, monks, and debteras would be at an end, through the knowledge the people would thus acquire of the Sacred Scriptures. If Bishop Gobat, on the receipt of King Theodorus' letter and the promised present, would be willing to make a present in return of some thousand Testaments and some hundred Bibles, it would be received with thankfulness, and contribute to the achievement of his purpose, to establish the happiness of his people upon the saving knowledge of the Word of God.

“My own personal desire is, God granting me health and life, to return to Abyssinia, and to continue, as described in my journal, our missionary work among the people in word and deed—some of us occasionally doing some work for the King. Then (whenever he shall have subdued the rebellion) we may be enabled to effect a permanent establishment. By degrees we may succeed in establishing schools, to educate young men as colporteurs, Scripture readers, and schoolmasters. This must be a work of time—it may even take years to accomplish. At the present moment our work seems clearly defined, viz.—*To disseminate the Scriptures throughout the whole country, and to endeavour, by useful labour and a pious walk and conversation, to earn the confidence of the King and of his people.*”

The desire of Flad has been accomplished. From Cairo he went to Jerusalem, accompanied Bishop Gobat to Europe, and is now again in Abyssinia. The advice of the King's confessor was followed, as the following letter, the latest received from Abyssinia, shews, as well as that the mission may now be considered as established, with the full sanction of the King:—

COPY.

GONDAR, *May 4, 1859.*

MY LORD,—Having been requested by the King to come to Gondar, on account of the illness of the British Consul, who is now sending a messenger to Massowah, I have begged him to forward this, as I wish to embrace every opportunity of giving you information of what is going on in this country. Before coming here, I saw the brethren Flad, Saalmuller, and Waldmeyer, (just arrived from Egypt,) who related to me their trying experience in their journey.

They, together with Mrs Flad, arrived at Matama, on the frontier, in perfect health, from which place they informed me of their safe arrival. We were then in the King's camp, who also received a letter from them, with which he was much pleased. Their journey forward into this country was somewhat retarded on account of an expedition of the King's to the Gallas; and brother Schrol (a master-gunsmith, a man of deep and enlightened piety) fell ill, and died at Wohné, of inflammation of the brain. Immediately after, his son (a fine lad of fifteen, and of the same profession) died

of typhus at Tchelga. Brother Flad next became ill nearly unto death, and was carried in a litter by men to this place. Meyer, also, (who had gone to meet the brethren,) and Saalmuller, caught the fever, but not seriously. Mrs Flad and Waldmeyer alone escaped, and are still in good health. I am grieved to communicate such melancholy intelligence. The King is much grieved. He feels especially the loss of such a man as Schrol and his son, as he had long desired to have such a workman. But He who has done it knows *why*; and all that our God does is *good*, and never to be blamed, as we can attest by many experiences in this country. I met the surviving brethren on the shore of the lake Zana, with the King. Our meeting, though joyful, was mingled with sorrow for the loss we have sustained. I found Flad free from fever, but still much reduced, and very weak. His wife is in excellent health.

If you have received our Report of December 1858, of our journey to the Woollo-Gallas, and of our conversations with the King, you will easily believe me, and rejoice to hear it, that the King has received and welcomed the brethren in the best and kindest manner. As we now know the King's mind, we wrote to the brethren, (coming from Egypt,) requesting them at once to give his Majesty all the Bibles which the British and Foreign Bible Society had sent to him. Formerly we had advised that only a portion should be given. He received them with the utmost joy, and began immediately to distribute them. Whenever he gave a

Bible to any of the superior priests of the churches, he enjoined them henceforth to teach the people out of these books, in the vernacular Amharic alone. We have often conversed with him on this subject, and he is now most zealous in his endeavours to introduce the Amharic as the ecclesiastical language of the country, in which, if he succeeds, I shall consider the first and most important step is taken towards a reformation. He has already begun to act as a reformer. He considers the Holy Scriptures as all that is essential, which he thinks involves the belief of the Trinity, and right views of the sacraments. Outward ceremonies he considers unimportant, and will not compel foreigners to comply with them. He therefore conjured us thrice over to tell him, in truth, whether we believed the gospel. Each time we assured him we did, with our whole heart; that we made it our rule of faith and practice, and were ready to die for it. He exclaimed, "Now we are united; you are my children, of whom I am bound to take care. Let us partake of the Lord's Supper together to-morrow." On that night we really made a covenant of friendship with him. Bender and I remained with him till midnight, and had a most interesting and agreeable conversation with him. "Yea," he said, "ask what you will, and I will give it you."

On the following day he engaged us to go with him, and shew him how to blast rocks; and when he had seen us blast nine large stones, he was satisfied and delighted, and, unknown to us, proceeded with some of his chief officers to our tent, and ordered our servant to

give him some of our wine and provisions, of which he partook with his attendants. When we returned in the evening, we were delighted by finding the King there. He at once called us to him, saying, "Come, my children, you have long been my guests, it is now time that I should be yours." He made us sit by him and drink to his health. He remained till late at night, and, among other things, said, "Do not believe I am an Abyssinian at heart; no, I am as one of you." Next day he presented us with 400 dollars, and an order on the chief officer of Customs for 600 more—making about £120. He gave us, besides, silk gowns and Margaff-dereb—clothes only worn by the great people of the country.

Thus you see that during the last year the Lord has been with us, and done more for us than we could have asked or expected, in moving the King to have such full confidence in us. He would not taste a drop of wine in any Abyssinian house for fear of poison.

We are on tolerably good terms with the Abuna; but he is a covetous man, and not very upright; moreover, he is rather jealous at seeing the King's favour for us, and his disposition to follow our advice.

I have just visited and examined our Jewish school, and have been much pleased with it. It now contains twenty-three boys; but now all, both young and old, will learn. The schoolmaster assures me that many Jews—some from great distances—come to ask him to instruct their children; and he gives me hopes that, within a short time, the numbers will rise to fifty. I

saw, with pleasure, that all the children read fluently; and I hope that, ere long, the Christians will be zealous, and ask for schools for their children. Lately, the King himself examined one of our boys, and was much pleased with him. We have taken him into our house.

With kind regards from all the brethren to Mrs. Gobat and yourself,—I remain, an humble and weak pilgrim,

J. J. GOTTLIEB KIENZLEN.

THE ANGLICAN BISHOP AT JERUSALEM.

NOTICE OF THE FALASHA, OR ABYSSINIAN JEWS—
APPENDED TO MR FLAD'S JOURNAL.

“I beg to notice here a few particulars with regard to a portion of that remarkable nation, the Jews, in Habesh. I paid many visits among them, and had many conversations with them, but am not yet sufficiently acquainted with their Divine services, manners, and customs, to give full satisfaction to those who are interested in them. They are reserved about these matters, and apt to evade answers to inquiries. They are most numerous in the provinces of Ouara and Gotsham. The Chief Rabbi resides in Ouara. But they are to be found scattered throughout Tchelga, Dembea, Woggera, and Shoa—in the latter their number is represented to be considerable. Each Jewish village has in the middle its Mesjid (synagogue), with its single door to the east; but not always a priest. In these a light is always kept burning. Within, towards the west, carpets or mats are spread, on which the priest stands at prayer. They are always eunuchs.

Their sacerdotal garments consist of wide trousers, white; a shirt of some fine white stuff, and a girdle of white Abyssinian cloth round the loins. They also wear a white turban. They use the Psalms at prayer. Besides the Sanbal (Sabbath) they strictly keep various other festivals enjoined in the law. No work is done from sunset on Friday till sunset on Saturday. They employ Mohammedans as their shepherds. They eat the Passover, calling it Korban (sacrifice); our Jews call it only the remembrance of the sacrifice. They observe the feast of unleavened bread, in remembrance of the Exodus, for a week. They also keep the Feast of Tabernacles and the new moons. Every Sabbath a lamb is offered at the Mesjid. The flesh, roasted, is eaten by the congregation—the bones and intestines are burnt. If they are unable to offer a lamb, bread is brought into the Mesjid, which they eat together, calling it an offering. The poorer partake first. The priests receive tithes of everything. They have but few schools—most of the children learn to read at the Christian schools. They live in lawful matrimony—sins of unchastity are almost unknown among them. Their gravediggers, who are seven in number, are unclean after digging a grave, for seven days. They never allow a death to take place in their houses. The dying person is carried into a tent before the house, where he remains till he dies. After childbirth, a woman is unclean for forty days. If any of their cattle are torn by wild beasts, it is unclean, and given away to the Mohammedans. Those who live at enmity are

excluded from Divine service till they are reconciled before the priest. The Jews are more industrious than the Christians. They all practise agriculture, and have had land given to them for this purpose by the present king, who is very friendly to them. Besides agriculture, they also practise masonry, smithcraft, weaving, &c., but never merchandise.

“As regards missionary work among them, we can testify that they shewed a longing desire for the Word of God (the Old Testament.) Had we last year had some hundreds of Bibles, we might have distributed them amongst the Jews, *with certainty that they would read them.* They believe that Christ was the great prophet spoken of by Moses, (Deut. xviii. 15)—The Son of the Virgin, (Isa. vii. 14)—The Child, (Isa. ix. 6)—The Shiloh, (Gen. xlix. 10.) If asked why they do not ‘hear Him,’ (Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19,) they answer, ‘Because our fathers did not.’ We once conversed with a priest about the prophecies of the Old Testament till he struck his head with his hands, crying out, ‘Hold your peace! hold your peace!! I will not hear anything about Christ. I will not believe in Him.’ Our intercourse with them made us hope much from missionary work among them, although the Abyssinian priests and Christians generally expressed their despair of ever bringing the Jews to believe in Christ. ‘The Kamants and Tiggers,’ they said, ‘might sooner be converted than the Jews.’ Our hope is, that this interesting people may be raised from their present degradation, and perhaps even become a salt for the

Abyssinian Church. In its present state, we could not advise any Jews who may be brought to believe on Christ, to join the Abyssinian Church. To form a separate church of believing Israelites might be dangerous. Our plan must be to instruct them as far as we can, and trust to God in His good time to make our way plain."

THE END.

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